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"UNOBSERVANT," "MODERN" AND OTHER ORTHODOX JEWS

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JUDAISM, conceived as a free and non-partisan organ, is dedicated to the creative discussion and exposition of the religious, moral and philosophical concepts of Judaism and their relevance to the problems of modern society. Through an exploration of the meaning and needs of the Jewish experience, it hopes to widen the channels of communication among Jews and to affirm Jewish verity and vitality to the world at large.

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JUDAISM

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

In increasing measure, modern men are turning again to the quest for a worldview on the issues that are timeless—the meaning of life, the challenge of death, the purpose of suffering, the significance of the individual, his relation to society, and the goal of history. In order to advance this enterprise of spiritual discovery of our time this Journal has been projected. It will be primarily concerned with the philosophy, ethics, and religion of Judaism as a factor in the contemporary world . . .

We are committed to the proposition that Judaism has positive value today for Jews and for the world . . . At the same time, we disassociate ourselves from the dangerous tendency toward the hardening of party lines on the contemporary Jewish scene . . . The members of the Board of Editors belong to every school of Jewish life or to none. The trends popularly referred to as Orthodox, Conservatism, Reform, Reconstructionism, as well as others that as yet have no specific names, have their advocates among us, though no institution or movement is officially represented . . . Undoubtedly, our differences will find expression in these pages, but we shall be at one in opposing the dogmatism which takes for granted that one's own particular standpoint has a monopoly on truth and the authoritarianism which would suppress any contrary point of view.

Judaism will be dedicated to the quest for truth in the spirit of freedom. Our columns will be open to anyone who has something significant to say and the ability to say it well. New and unconventional interpretations, whatever their standpoint, will be welcomed from every source, for we share the conviction of the Talmud that "Both these and the others are the words of the living God." *From the introductory article by Robert Gordis, "Toward a Renaissance of Judaism" in Vol. I, No. 1.*

The First Reader

Three Analyses of Anti-Semitism

The insights of an imaginative artist may go deeper than the tortuous — and often tortured — conclusions of scholarly research and the results of statistical surveys. One can fill a library with works on anti-Semitism, its history, causes, manifestations and promised cures. Yet this epidemic of the human spirit continues to elude both full understanding and total remedy.

One of the most striking contributions to the understanding of the nature of anti-Semitism was that of the French writer, Sartre, and *Mitchell Silver*, in "The Roots of Anti-Semitism," applies his theory to a moving parable by Franz Kafka.

If some progress is to be made in combatting the disease, we also need the light emanating from scientific research. In his paper, "Hating The Jews," *Neil J. Kressel* brings to bear some of the facts that social psychology has been able to discover and summarizes a great deal of research in the field.

The bad conscience which the Christian world felt after the enormity of the Nazi horror was revealed, is now wearing off, and a broad spectrum of anti-Semitism, with or without disguise, is appearing throughout the Western world. In the Moslem world it flourishes only in its most violent form.

In his paper, "Anti-Semitism: A Contemporary Christian Perspective," *Eugene J. Fisher*, a leading Catholic expert on intergroup relations, sets forth the official position of the Roman Catholic Church condemning anti-Jewish prejudice. These pronouncements are slowly beginning to percolate to all levels of the Catholic community. The author then offers a clear and balanced survey of the major varieties of anti-Semitism, right, center and left. Avoiding the extremes both of optimism and pessimism, he makes it clear that there is still a way to go before the disease is truly brought under control.

Two Approaches to the Black-Jewish Relationship

A classical Hebrew proverb declares that "new troubles cause one to forget the older ones." The increase of problems in every area of contemporary life has, temporarily at least, pushed into the background the important issue of Black-Jewish relationships in America. It is difficult to say when these issues will surface again but they continue to cry out for a solution or, at least, a fruitful approach.

There are important ethical issues involved here. The necessity for

greater sensitivity on the part of each group for the aspirations and needs of the other constitutes the basic thesis of the paper, "Black-Anti-Semitism," by *Sol Roth*.

Nathan Perlmutter reminds us that success in building proper inter-group relations requires the participation of both parties. His article, "Black-Jewish Relations: A Two Way Street," examines some of the nitty-gritty aspects of the question. Clearly, it takes two to untangle.

O, Say, What Do You See?

The growing impact of television on modern society and its dominant role in the shaping of public opinion are obvious truisms, particularly after the November, 1980 American elections. The State of Israel, which is heavily dependent upon public opinion, has a great stake, therefore, in the effective use of the medium. In his paper, "The Medium Has A Message," *M. Ethan Katsh* analyzes the theoretical and the practical aspects of the subject.

On the Fringe of Judaism

In increasing measure, research into the Jewish past has demonstrated that Judaism was never monolithic either in form or content. In every period of Jewish history, the Jewish tradition was characterized by a variety of patterns in thought and practice.

In our pluralistic age this luxuriant variety is even more obvious. In addition to the various "recognized patterns of Jewish life and thought" there are many different groups "on the fringe of Judaism," some stationary, others moving toward the center or away from it.

Three aspects of this multiplicity of outlook and lifestyle are examined in this issue of JUDAISM.

Allen S. Maller, in his paper, "Jews, Cults and Apostates" surveys some of the cults that have proliferated in recent years and attracted a number of Jewish youth into their ranks, to the consternation of the American Jewish community.

Steven Huberman, in "Conversion to Judaism: An Analysis of Family Matters," presents the reactions of converts to Judaism who discuss the attitudes that they have encountered on the part of born Jews in their families and their communities.

The third paper presents an analysis of a short story by Henry Roth. In "Jewish Identity: The Surveyor Surveyed," *Mark A. Bernheim* discloses the ambivalence in the souls of many alienated Jews who, in spite of the distance that they have placed between themselves and their Jewish heritage, have not succeeded in uprooting all of the vestiges of Jewish consciousness. The author of the essay suggests that this ambivalence characterizes not only the hero of the story but, also, its author.

The Proper and Improper "Uses" of the Holocaust

In recent months, there has been considerable discussion regarding the "uses" to which the Holocaust is being put and the interpretations that are being placed upon it, both among Jews and non-Jews. The "universalization" of the Holocaust, that is proposed in various quarters, derives from differing considerations. It has been passionately denounced in some circles in an effort to deny the full scope of this massive horror of modern mankind. In her paper, "Invoking the Holocaust," *Deborah Lipstadt* challenges the current interpretations which trivialize the tragedy and seek to exploit it for illegitimate ends.

A Founding Father

Conservative Judaism is the religious movement with the largest following in American Jewry and is second to none in significance. Nevertheless, there is all too little familiarity with the life and work of Zacharias Frankel, the distinguished German-Jewish scholar and leader. Frankel was President of the Breslau Seminary, the first modern institution for the training of rabbis. He was recognized early as the leader, indeed the architect, of Conservative Judaism, which arose in Germany, where Reform and modern Orthodoxy also had their birth.

In his paper, "Zacharias Frankel and the European Origins of Conservative Judaism," *Ismar Schorsch* presents the major achievements of the founder of "positive-historical Judaism," and indicates major areas of unfinished business facing the movement today.

Religion Is Like Art

Religious believers have always insisted that their faith represents "the truth" — that is to say, that it contains a body of teaching that conforms to the canons of rationality. Even when a doctrine seems to contradict the evidence of the senses or the conclusions of logic, the advocate of religion would argue that a non-rational response to the mystery of existence is the only reasonable course to adopt. In Santayana's words, "It is not wisdom to be merely wise."

Nevertheless, while religion shares, with science, a concern with truth, it is probably closer to art, which is dedicated to the question of the beautiful. In his paper, "Judaism as an Art," *Allan Lazaroff* demonstrates the parallels between religion and art, and indicates the role of these two activities of the human spirit in enhancing the quality of life.

Buber Revisited

The appearance of a seminal figure in human thought — and often of a figure less than seminal — stimulates an interest in discovering the

background, antecedents and possible sources of his worldview. Naturally, differences of opinion with regard to questions of dependency and originality will arise among scholars.

In his review-essay, "Buber's Way To 'I and Thou,'" *Maurice Friedman* offers a rebuttal of Rivka Horwitz's thesis that Buber's thought derived a good deal from the Catholic philosopher Ferdinand Ebner and the Jewish thinker Franz Rosenzweig. In the process, new insight is achieved into the worldview of all of these thinkers.

Another View of Heschel

More than a decade has passed since the untimely death of Abraham Joshua Heschel. His impact on both the Jewish and the general community as a spokesman for the Jewish tradition, its core of belief and its ethical content, continues unabated. His contribution to the life and faith of our times is reflected in frequent quotations from his writings and in a steady stream of studies and analyses of his work. Two recent books on Heschel are the subject of a review-essay by *John C. Merkle*, who writes from a Christian perspective.

R.G.

The Roots of Anti-Semitism: A Kafka Tale and a Sartrean Commentary

MITCHELL SILVER

ALBERT MEMMI HAS ACUTELY NOTED THAT though the word "Jew" does not appear in Kafka's published works, his diaries reveal his obsession with his Jewish identity.¹ The word may be absent, but the preoccupation with the theme emerges time and again. A case in point is afforded by the short tale, "Community." Accepting Sartre's view of the nature of anti-Semitism, (a view which will be illustrated in this paper), we find here a moving metaphor of the aetiology of Jew-hatred. If an underlying theme of Kafka's stories is the situation of the Jew in the world, and if Sartre has provided an accurate analysis of that situation, then the latter's insights should illuminate the former's meaning. In "Community" the reader senses a definite thematic unity, and yet the story's precise "meaning" remains obscure. I think that a Sartrean interpretation lessens the obscurity. The story is quoted in full below:

Community

We are five friends who once came out of a house, one behind the other. First one came out and stood next to the gate, and then the second came out by the gate, or rather glided as light as a ball of quicksilver, and stood not far from the first. Then the third, then the fourth, and then the fifth. Finally, we all stood in a row. People would openly wonder about us; they would point and say, "Those five have come out of this house." Since then we have lived together, and it would be a peaceful life if a sixth would not continually mix in. He does nothing to us, but he is burdensome to us, and that is doing enough. Why does he force himself into where he is not wanted? We don't know him and don't want to admit him among us. Earlier, we five hadn't known one another and, if you will, even now we don't know one another. But what among us five is possible and will be tolerated, is not possible and will not be tolerated in this sixth. Moreover, we are five and don't wish to be six. And, anyway, what is the sense of this continual togetherness; even among us five it has no sense, but we are already together, and will remain so. But we don't want a new unity, even if it stems from our experience. How can one get all this across to the sixth. Long explanations would practically constitute an admission into our circle. We prefer not to explain and will not admit him. However much he sucks up to us, we push him away with our elbows. But no matter how much we push him away, he comes again.²

1. Albert Memmi *Dominated Man* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), p. 93.

2. The translation (literal rather than literary) is my own. The German text used is from *Sämtliche Erzählungen*, ed. P. Raabe, (Frankfurt am Main, 1970). I have been unable to find

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Let us look at how this “community” of five comes into being. To begin with, the original commonality of circumstances is minimal. Five people come out of a house, one after another, and stand next to each other by a gate. There is no reason, or at least none is given, why they were in the house or why they stand by the gate. Although, later in the story, the narrator will refer to the group’s togetherness, in the opening lines the group is not described as being “in the house together” or coming “out of the house together” or standing “by the gate together.” Instead, they come out “one behind the other,” “not far from” one another, and finally all stand “in a row.” The significance of this “next to one another” terminology as opposed to describing the five as together, is that the former description avoids constituting a group. “Being behind” and “being not far from” are external relations. They create no true unity among the people whom they relate. The five are not yet taken together. A similar point is made by having each individual come out separately, and come out as a mere number. Sam does not come out and join Joe and Tom but, rather, the third comes to stand by the second who stands not far from the first. The appearance of each person as a numbered individual presents one group as a mere quantitative aggregate. There is no cohesion to this group, no qualitative unity. They are not even an undifferentiated Five yet, but, instead, individuated, although interchangeable, ordinal units; we have the first, second, third, fourth and fifth, but not yet “Five.”

It is after they are standing by the gate that the group’s formative experience occurs. “People would openly wonder about us; they would point and say, ‘Those five have come out of this house.’ Since then we have lived together. . .” It is other people’s looking at them and considering them as a group which creates their group consciousness. They have become what Sartre calls “the Us-object.” The Us-object is made by Third Parties who “cause it to be born by their look.”³ In particular, the Third Parties’ look views the members of the “Us-object” as being in a common situation and, in so doing, makes them aware of their common situation, or, one may even say that, in some sense, creates their common situation. As Sartre points out, any objective situation that people are in can be turned into a common situation by the look of outsiders.

But if some situations thus appear empirically more favorable to the upsurge of the “Us” we must not lose sight of the fact that *every* human situation, since it is an engagement in the midst of others, is experienced as “Us” as soon as a third appears. If I am walking in the street behind this man and see only his back, I have with him the minimum of technical and practical relations which can be conceived. Yet once the third looks at *me*,

an English translation, since the story does not appear in most English Kafka collections. I assume that a translation appears in *The Complete Stories*, ed. Nahum Glatzer (1971), but I cannot be sure because I have not seen that volume.

3. *Being and Nothingness*, tr. by Hazel Barnes, (N.Y.: Washington Square Press, 1956 [Pocket Book, 1971]), p. 544.

looks at the road, looks at the *other*, I am bound to the other by the solidarity of the "Us."⁴

The people notice the simple, almost accidental, fact that "those five have come out of this house," but, by placing the five in this situation together, the people have created "the solidarity of the 'Us'" among the five. Their having come out of the same house may not originally have been of any significance to the five. But as soon as others look at that fact, the five are thrown "together." The people said that the five were from the house and "Since then we have lived together." The five's "living together" is their living of a common situation. From the time of the Third Parties' look they are in the same boat, and so they can date their "togetherness" from the moment of the Third Parties' objectification of their situation.

According to Sartre, this objectification of one's common situation with another, this being turned into an "Us," is an "experience of humiliation and impotence."⁵ Although Kafka gives us no explicit humiliation-connoting words, the image of being "openly wondered" at and pointed at has a humiliating flavor to it. Why should one feel humiliated and impotent when one is constituted as part of an "Us-object?" It is because one is "without recourse."⁶ You cannot protest that you don't know these other four standing by the gate. It is useless to claim that you just happened to be in the house with the other four; that it is really a fact of no importance. The Third Parties' remarking of this fact makes it of some importance, and we are forced to be an Us-object. This being helplessly turned into an individual object within a collectivity, which is also an object, is humiliation, as Sartre sees it.

For no reason, other than that others have decided to see them as such, the five have become a community. And now a sixth wants to join the group. This sixth's wanting to be a part of the group is seen as the sole cause of whatever problems the community has. "It would be a peaceful life" if it weren't for the sixth's continual interference. But right after we are told that it is the sixth's mixing in which causes distress, it is admitted that actually "he does nothing to us." He is simply burdensome. But how is he burdensome if he "does nothing" to the group?

Here we see the social psychological structures that Sartre outlined in *Anti-Semite and Jew*⁷ beginning to manifest themselves. The anti-Semite finds the Jew burdensome and blames all of the nation's problems on him, not for doing anything particularly harmful, but merely for his perceived attempt to assimilate into the community with which the anti-Semite wishes to identify. The form of this identification is pre-logical. The community is almost mystical, held together with bonds of "*blut und*

4. Ibid., p. 543.

5. Ibid., p. 542.

6. Ibid.

7. (New York: Schocken Books, 1948).

boden." The group's unity is irrational, and pride is taken in this irrationality. "We are five and don't wish to be six." No reason is given for preferring to be five rather than six. It seems rather arbitrary to insist upon being a group of five and not six. But the arbitrariness is just the point. The security comes from being part of a group whose identity is irrationally stipulated. Once you have been made part of the group, no reason can ever show that you don't really belong. You are simply part of the five. If, unlike the Jew, you are French, it doesn't matter that you speak French abominably, are unfamiliar with the nation's history or literature or that you are a Bordeaux farmer with almost nothing in common with a Parisian worker. You are French and you belong irrevocably to the French nation.

But what constitutes the French nation for the anti-Semite? It is the everpresent Jew who, like the sixth, "tries to force himself into where he is not wanted." The only real activity that the group of five seem to participate in as a group is keeping out the sixth one, and the only reason to keep out the sixth is that he is not one of the five. At first, there is an attempt to explain their refusal of the sixth. "We don't know him and don't want to admit him among us." This parallels the anti-Semite's initial attempt to rationalize his repugnance for the Jews. Jews are too greedy or tactless or ambitious or loud. They are too self reflective or too emotional. When one argues with the anti-Semite and shows his accusations to be unfounded or selectively made it is to no avail. Suppose you show that there are Frenchmen whom he accepts into the nation who are ambitious, loud or self-reflective. Are they to be excluded from the nation? Of course not. For it is not the purported ambition or loudness that is objected to, it is the Jewish ambition and the Jewish loudness that are particularly offensive. And so the narrator, after offering the sixth's unfamiliarity as the reason for his non-acceptance, confesses that "Earlier we hadn't known one another and, if you will, even now we don't know one another." Well, then, if the five do not know one another, what is the sense of pointing out that the sixth is unknown to them? How can the quality of being unknown be relevant to group membership? The answer is that "... what among us five is possible and will be tolerated is not possible and will not be tolerated in the sixth." Christian avarice and Jewish avarice are treated differently. What is tolerable in the one is intolerable in the other. Sartre says that it is not any positive qualities or circumstances of the Jews that make the anti-Semite hate Jews. On the contrary, it is his hatred of Jews which makes him hate certain qualities which they have or circumstances that they are in. Sartre notes that nobody would resent it if it turned out that Normandy provided an undue proportion of lawyers for France. However, if there are "too many" Jewish lawyers, the statistic becomes objectionable. "What among us five . . . will be tolerated . . . will not be tolerated in this sixth."

Sartre says that the anti-Semite requires non-rational links with the

French nation. This non-rational linkage is an attempt to form a unity which is not based on experience. If we base our unity on our common language or common history we can have a reasoned togetherness. Kafka's narrator concedes, one might almost say insists, upon this point; "What is the sense of this continual togetherness; even among us five it has no sense, but we are already together and will remain so." Their togetherness is a given. A senseless unjustifiable fact, or, rather, a brute fact that is somehow supposed to be its own justification. The five are already together and so they will remain. Moreover, they will not take the sixth in and create a new unity "even if it stems from our experience."

Here, again, Kafka's story reflects the anti-Semite's refusal to accept a community, a "new unity," that is based on actual common activity. No matter how much the Jew participates in the life of the nation, he is still not a real Frenchman. It makes no difference whether he has fought at Verdun, was a member of the resistance and speaks no language other than French. There is a refusal to make a "new unity" based on common experience. This refusal is important. For if the anti-Semite were to recognize that real unities arise from common activity and a common situation, he would be forced to recognize the true unities and true divisions in society. For Sartre, these true unities and divisions are, primarily, of class. So the anti-Semite seeks a mythical unity to avoid confronting the class-fragmented nature of his society.

In the final lines of the story the narrator declares the community's reluctance to make explanations to the sixth. Once again, the non-rational nature of the exclusion is underlined. There can be no explanation for the exclusion because there are no reasons for it. But there is a further ground to avoid explanations. "Explanations would practically constitute an admission into our circle." How does explaining your rejection of someone from your group amount to admitting him? The admission lies in the recognition of the rejecter's humanity, or, more specifically, his rationality. Explaining something to someone is a species of reasoning *with* him. In reasoning together we form a community of rational beings, a community that ignores the irrational particularities of existence. Hence, Sartre's analysis of a typical Jewish reaction to anti-Semitism. The Jew will everywhere and always try to reason with his fellow beings. He wishes to recognize only the reality of the universal, the rational. The Jews' "passion for the universal [is chosen] in order to fight the particularist conceptions that set them apart."⁸ Through reason, the universally valid form, the Jew veritably creates the "new unity" which the anti-Semite would deny. "The anti-Semite who follows his reasoning becomes his brother, despite his own resistance."⁹ Explanations do constitute an admission to the circle, when the circle is humanity. We don't explain ourselves to animals or things — only to persons.

8. Ibid., p. 111.

9. Ibid., p. 112.

The last line of the tale speaks of the continual need to push away the sixth. And, indeed, the maintenance of the outsider as outsider is a continual need if this group is to survive. For all that this group is, is a "community of five," i.e., that community which excludes the sixth. If the sixth is not around to be actively excluded, if he is not there to be "pushed away," the community falls apart. "Thus the anti-Semite is in the unhappy position of having a vital need for the very enemy he wishes to destroy."¹⁰

If the anti-Semite can create his nation of true Frenchmen only by regarding the Jew as the other, then the Jew's identity as the other is a result of anti-Semitism. Therefore, Sartre concludes that anti-Semitism does not exist because of the otherness of the Jew, but, rather, the Jew's otherness exists as a consequence of anti-Semitism. In other words, just as the look of the people originally made the group (although their continued community depended on exclusion of the sixth), for Sartre the look of the anti-Semite makes the Jew. Jews find themselves, then, in the position of the original five who come from the same house and, from the look of Third Parties, have been forced to live together ever since. Jews may have abandoned Judaism, speak no common language, share different class interests, but as long as they are viewed as "coming from the same house" they must live together and share a common fate. They must live their situation.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 28.

Hating the Jews: A New View From Social Psychology

NEIL J. KRESSEL

NOT SURPRISINGLY, THE SOCIAL SCIENTIFIC study of antisemitism flourished in the years following the Second World War. The news of Hitler's atrocities challenged the esteem and conscience of modern man. Scholars, no less than laymen, were at a loss to explain how such horrors could occur in a twentieth-century, civilized nation — and that that nation was Germany, the center of world science, art, and scholarship, made the dilemma more frightening still. Psychologists, sociologists, historians, political scientists, journalists and novelists all attempted to use the tools of their professions, however inadequate, to shed some light on the recent past. Perhaps the greatest effort was mounted by social scientists — students of human behavior whose theories had been burned to ashes in the ovens at Birkenau. With uncharacteristic rapidity, academics produced major works and introduced provocative ideas.¹

During the mid-fifties, however, social psychologists moved away from the study of antisemitism as a problem in itself. Although the authoritarian personality conception predominated in many circles, research did not focus on antisemitism after the study by Adorno et al. As images of the Nazi concentration camps grew dimmer and more distant, social psychologists and others turned their efforts to more pressing social problems. Indeed, C.H. Stember² found, through the analysis of past survey data, that on virtually all dimensions antisemitism had declined markedly between 1935 and 1960. People's intuitive judgments agreed with Stember's conclusion; after all, Jews occupied important positions in government, business, the arts, and most other areas of employment. Moreover, the days of such agitators as Father Coughlin and Gerald L. K. Smith seemed long gone. Most social scientists saw antisemitism as a dying

1. e.g., N.W. Ackerman and M. Jahoda, *Anti-Semitism and Emotional Disorder: A Psychoanalytic Interpretation* (New York: Harper, 1950). T.W. Adorno, E. Frenkel-Brunswick, D.J. Levinson and R.N. Sanford, *The Authoritarian Personality* (New York: Harper, 1950). G.W. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice* (Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley, 1954). B. Bettelheim and M. Janowitz, *Dynamics of Prejudice* (New York: Harper, 1950). A. Rose, "Anti-Semitism's Root in City Hatred," *Commentary*, VI (1948): 374-378. E. Simmel, ed., *Anti-Semitism: A Social Disease* (New York: International Universities Press, 1948).

2. C.H. Stember, ed., *Jews in the Mind of America* (New York: Basic Books, 1966).

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social problem and interest focused on how to rid contemporary America of vestigial traces of Jew-hatred. Viewed in this context, it is no wonder that most social psychologists and sociologists turned their attentions to issues that seemed more serious and more immediate, for example — black-white relations.

Although most scholars found Stember's research very comforting, several skeptics advised against overabundant and premature optimism.³ Looking back at two thousand years of Jew-hatred, how could one place complete faith in short periods of good fortune? After all, the Jewish position in Germany during the twenties had been described by some as enviable; what was to follow could not have been predicted from an analysis of Jewish political or socio-economic situations.

Unconvinced by the lull in active Jew-hatred, the ever vigilant B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League refused to abandon the study of antisemitism. During the early sixties a wave of vandalism had terrorized American synagogues. Reasoning that a country where such attacks had taken place was not a country where Jews could feel entirely safe, the ADL commissioned a major series of studies at the University of California at Berkeley. The ten volumes of the study, published between 1966 and 1979, constitute the main body of recent research on antisemitism.

In 1979, Harold Quinley and Charles Glock summarized the findings of the Berkeley studies in a volume entitled, *Antisemitism in America*.⁴ At least partially, the data discussed in this volume support Stember's contention about the decline of antisemitism in the United States. Quinley and Glock claim that "while antisemitism in America was once virulent and open, such is no longer the case today." In addition, "very few non-Jews today favor discriminating against the Jews in public areas such as employment, housing, college admissions, and hotels." As an encouraging tidbit of good news, the authors reported that "many non-Jews hold positive and sympathetic attitudes towards the Jews."

While support for discrimination against Jews in public areas has largely disappeared, many non-Jews still condone discrimination in the private sector, for example, social club membership. The Berkeley studies claim that "antisemitic prejudice today is given major expression through the association of negative and objective traits with being Jewish."

Quinley and Glock, citing the work of many other researchers, also explored the social location of antisemitism in contemporary America. The elderly and the working class tend to be more antisemitic than the young and the middle class. But the elderly and the working class have had fewer years of education. Through statistical analyses of survey results, Selznick and Steinberg (1969)⁵ determined that lack of education

3. B. Halpern, "Anti-Semitism in the Perspective of Jewish History," in Stember, *Op. cit.*
4. New York: Free Press, 1979.

5. G. Selznick and S. Steinberg, *The Tenacity of Prejudice: Anti-Semitism in Contemporary America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969).

is the major sociological predictor of Jew-hatred today. By teaching people the norms of democracy, equality, civil rights, civil liberties, and cultural tolerance, education contributes to a reduction in antisemitic prejudice. In addition, education combats prejudice by teaching people to think more clearly and systematically. In another survey, Glock and Stark showed that "Christianity fosters antisemitism when it teaches that there is no path to salvation except through Christ and where such teachings are interpreted as subjecting all non-believers to damnation."⁶

While the Berkeley studies underscore the connection between lack of education and Jew-hatred, they find no support for several traditional psychological theories of antisemitism. For example, many social psychologists would expect that antisemitism would be tied to high levels of frustration. The scapegoat theory maintains that frustration leads to aggression against a weak minority. The Berkeley studies did not disprove the scapegoat theory; they merely failed to support it. The authoritarian personality theory, accepted by many social psychologists, maintains that a certain cluster of personality traits is generally found in antisemites. For example, in addition to hating the Jews, authoritarians would be likely to agree that sparing the rod spoils the child. They would also be likely to condemn severely any violations of conventional morality or any notions of sexual freedom. The Berkeley studies also found no support for the authoritarian personality syndrome.

Anyone seriously interested in understanding Jew-hatred would be well-advised to start with these ADL-sponsored studies. Selznick and Steinberg provide a detailed portrait of the socio-economic distribution of antisemitism in contemporary America. While they conclude their study with a limited optimism, they also show the extent to which certain quasi-antisemitic attitudes are prevalent among the uneducated, the wealthy, and the working class. Glock and Stark explore the religious sources of contemporary Jew-hatred and come up with some important conclusions. But these volumes and others in the Berkeley series fail to address several critical questions about the dynamics of antisemitism.

As Quinley and Glock admit, the Berkeley studies do not rule out psychological explanations such as the scapegoat theory and the authoritarian personality syndrome for other eras; they relate only to contemporary antisemitism. In fact, the Berkeley studies make no claims to explain any time periods other than the ones during which the data were gathered. They make surprisingly few references to the vast literature on the history of antisemitism, but, without historical perspective, the study of antisemitism will never tell us very much about the social and psychological dynamics of the rabid Jew-hatred of the past. Moreover, only by understanding the processes by which societies and individuals

6. C. Y. Glock and R. Stark, *Christian Beliefs and Anti-Semitism* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966).

came to accept the extreme antisemitism of the past can we hope to understand such processes if, and when, they occur in the future.

A popular metaphor describes antisemitism as a disease in the body politic — sometimes ravishing the organism and sometimes in remission, awaiting suitable conditions for its reemergence. If we accept this metaphor, can survey data ever tell us whether the disease has been cured? Can an understanding of Jew-hatred at its weakest tell us a great deal about Jew-hatred at its most severe peak? Probably such studies can explain much but, unfortunately, leave many questions unanswered.

Purely historical studies, on the other hand, fail to detail the processes by which an individual absorbs the antisemitism that surrounds him. Often, historical accounts provide insight into how individuals are affected by social change, but they seldom deal with that issue systematically. Social psychologists are perhaps best prepared to analyze such problems but they are not generally versed in the historical literature. In addition, seeing themselves as “scientists,” social psychologists only reluctantly enter arenas where quantified data is difficult to obtain. The emphasis of the social scientist is on locating general principles; the emphasis of the historian is on elegance, detail, and particulars. Each could learn from the other.

Let us look at a case where cooperation might be fruitful. Before Adolf Hitler came to power on 30 January, 1933, he never succeeded in winning more than 37% of the popular vote in a free election. Later Nazi propagandists bear responsibility for the myth that an irresistible public volition swept Hitler into the chancellery. In fact, he became Chancellor as a result of a “shoddy political deal with the ‘Old Gang’ whom he had been attacking for months past.”⁷ The Nazis fared only slightly better in the election that followed Hitler’s appointment; they scored 43.9% of the popular vote.⁸

Nevertheless, when 95.7% of Germany’s voters went to the polls seventeen months later, 90% of them said that they approved of Hitler’s assumption of the presidency following Hindenburg’s death. Of course, we should pay more attention to the turnout figure; voting against Hitler could accomplish little and involved considerable risk.⁹ These figures from Hitler’s plebiscite indicate that the balance of power had shifted decisively in his favor.

During the next decade, the German people (with very few exceptions) flocked to Hitler’s side. They mobilized for war with remarkable efficiency and seemed to display a genuine devotion to the Nazi cause. Although some small resistance brightens the history of the mid-1930s, Hitler’s regime stood unopposed from within during most of his tenure as

7. A. Bullock, *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny* (New York: Harper, 1971), p. 137

8. K. D. Bracher, *The German Dictatorship*, tr. by J. Steinberg (New York: Praeger, 1970), p. 203

9. Bullock, *Op. cit.*, p. 171.

dictator. Public opinion in Germany backed the Führer as he inaugurated the modern world's most heinous epoch.

How did all of this happen? How did by-and-large normal, modern people come to support such a regime? Obviously, a great deal of the support was mere compliance — obeying the regime to avoid the Gestapo. But, equally obviously, compliance was not the whole story. As Alan Bullock writes,

It is wrong to lay stress only on the element of coercion, and to ignore the degree to which Hitler commanded a genuine popular support in Germany. To suppose that the huge votes which he secured in his plebiscites were solely, or even principally, due to the Gestapo and the concentration camps is to miss what Hitler knew so well, the immense attraction to the masses of force plus success.¹⁰

A strong government had not ruled Germany since before the First World War. Also, the Weimar Republic had dealt especially poorly with the critical problems of the post-war era. Many were attracted to the Nazi regime because they saw it as Germany's last hope for a secure state of order and economic improvement. Historian David Schoenbaum argues that the Third Reich gained support because it promised something to everyone — "Labor's defeat was business's triumph, agriculture's frustrations labor's relief . . . the consumer's aggravation agriculture's compensation."¹¹

Sociological, economic, and political factors all contributed to the growth of Hitler's public support. Psychological and social psychological explanations cannot replace more traditional forms of historical logic. But social psychology can elucidate an additional, perhaps crucial, source of Hitler's support that has been overlooked by historians.

A well-established principle in social psychology is the attitude-follows-behavior phenomenon. It simply maintains that attitudinal change does not always precede a change in behavior. As a result of engaging in a certain behavior that is inconsistent with one's attitudes, one often changes those attitudes.¹² Two major theories are cited to explain this phenomenon. First, cognitive dissonance theory claims that attitudes are changed in order to reduce the unpleasant tension that results from having a set of attitudes that are inconsistent with one's behavior; in other words, one seeks to reduce cognitive dissonance. The second theory, self-perception theory, maintains that "in identifying his own internal states, an individual partially relies on the same external cues that others use when they infer his internal states."¹³ Thus, an individual who sees himself behaving in a way that a person who holds opinion X might

10. *Ibid.*, p. 153.

11. D. Schoenbaum, *Hitler's Social Revolution* (New York: Doubleday, 1966), p. 283.

12. D. Bem, *Beliefs and Human Affairs* (Belmont, Cal.: Brooks/Cole, 1970). The historical roots of the attitude-follows-behavior phenomenon can be traced to the works of several social theorists, most notably Lewin and G. Simmel.

13. Bem, *Op. cit.*, p. 50.

behave comes to assume that he holds opinion X. According to both cognitive dissonance theory and self-perception theory, the initial behavior requires a cause. That cause does not have to be opinion X; in fact, it may be entirely unrelated.

The attitude-follows-behavior phenomenon can help explain the internalization of antisemitism and other Nazi attitudes. From the standpoint of self-perception theory, by obeying Nazi laws, reading Nazi newspapers, attending Nazi rallies, voting for Nazis in plebiscites, and taking oaths to Adolf Hitler, many came to believe that they held Nazi attitudes. Viewed from the cognitive dissonance standpoint, by performing Nazi behaviors that were dissonant to non-Nazi attitudes, Germans increased cognitive dissonance; to reduce this dissonance, they developed Nazi attitudes. Finally, by performing Nazi behaviors *publicly*, people became committed to the behaviors; they subsequently developed the justifying attitudes. Watching others model the behaviors contributed to the pressure to conform; if people you respected were behaving like Nazis, then perhaps such behaviors were not immoral.

We are left with the question of why Germans initially performed the Nazi behaviors if attitudes were not the reason. (Of course, this entire analysis does not refer to those people who developed Nazi sentiments prior to Hitler's takeover.) The issue of original motives is crucial, since not all causes of Nazi behavior will have the same effect on ultimate attitude change. Attitude change will be minimal if the person perceives a clear, external source of his action. Only when the original source of the Nazi behavior is not clear will the above mechanisms operate.

The person who obeyed Nazi laws at the point of a gun would be least likely to internalize Nazi opinions. The most probable candidate for deep attitude change initially performed Nazi behaviors for less obvious reasons. For example,

- 1) because he approved of a particular social policy of the Nazi government, e.g., the way the Nazis dealt with unemployment;
- 2) because he approved of Nazi measures to strengthen the German state;
- 3) because of simple conformity effects;
- 2) because people he respected were Nazis;
- 3) because the Nazis controlled who would obtain the best jobs and who would move up in the state bureaucracy;
- 4) because there were no convenient alternatives; if you wanted to read a newspaper, you had to read a pro-Nazi one.

For any, or all, of these reasons (or others), a person might begin to perform specific Nazi behaviors. Through the cognitive dissonance and self-perception mechanisms, a person who had not previously approved of Nazi policies, such as antisemitism, found himself in the Nazi camp.

In the above example, social psychology provides a perspective on Hitler's public support that may overlap partially with traditional historical explanations. However, our understanding of antisemitism can inspire confidence only when we can make explicit the relationship among

various academic viewpoints. With historians attributing Jew-hatred to one set of factors and psychologists to another, whom are we to believe?

Are psychologists correct when they say that prejudice reflects a displacement of frustration upon a scapegoat? Are sociologists correct when they cite education as the major predictor of Jew-hatred? And are traditional historical explanations correct? Professional methodological biases and limitations have contributed to the disparity between different theories of antisemitism. In addition, where scholars focus their attention is, in part, dictated by their interests; consequently, psychologists have little to say about some time periods that fascinate historians. Obviously, the relative lack of psychological studies of Jew-hatred during the Middle Ages does not mean that psychological forces were unimportant. And the insignificance of variables other than education and religion in the Berkeley studies does not indicate that such variables are insignificant in understanding the dynamics of Jew-hatred. By evolving a general theory of antisemitism and integrating the findings of several disciplines, social scientists move closer to the phenomenon which they hope to understand. Against the ominous background of antisemitism, understanding is small comfort. But we have nowhere else to start.

Anti-Semitism: A Contemporary Christian Perspective

EUGENE FISHER

I. *Condemnation and Removal of the Religious Roots of Anti-Semitism Today*

IN THE BRIEF PERIOD SINCE THE END OF the Second World War, over forty official statements by Catholic and Protestant bodies have been issued on the subject of Christian-Jewish relations, including that of the Second Vatican Council, *Nostra Aetate* no. 4. These documents record, and I would say “fix” irrevocably in Christian tradition, a renewed and renewing attitude on the part of the Church toward the Jewish people.¹ Most of them quite directly condemn anti-Semitism as un-Christian and even anti-Christian, as did *Nostra Aetate*:

The Church, mindful of the patrimony she shares with the Jews and moved not by political reasons but by the Gospel's spiritual love, decries hatred, persecutions, and displays of anti-Semitism, directed against Jews at any time and by anyone.

Furthermore, these official promulgations by the Churches to their own members have also quite honestly sought to remove the very roots of the Christian teaching of contempt which admittedly paved the way in the Western world for the modern, “secularist” ideology of anti-Semitism that produced the Holocaust of the Jews of Europe. *Nostra Aetate*, thus, flatly denied any form of collective responsibility on the part of the Jews concerning the death of Jesus and, even more significantly, sought to build a new Christian attitude toward the Jews on the more positive foundation of acknowledgment of Judaism's continuing role in God's plan of salvation: “God holds the Jews (present tense) more dear for the sake of their Fathers; He does not repent of the gifts He makes or of the calls He issues.” Christianity today, then, officially sees itself as in partnership with the Jewish people, in witness and in shared longing for the coming of God's kingdom, rather than in competition with them. In such a vision there is no room for polemics, only the irenics of a living “spiritual link” between the communities, as Pope John Paul II is so fond of saying.

This renewed vision has produced a revolution in Catholic teaching concerning Judaism that would have seemed quite incredible to our grandparents, let alone the hundreds of generations of Christians who went before us.²

1. See H. Croner, editor, *Stepping Stones to Further Jewish-Christian Relations* (London: Stimulus, 1977) for texts of these documents and M. McGarry, *Christology After Auschwitz* (New York: Paulist Press, 1977) for commentary.

2. See E. Fisher, *Faith Without Prejudice* (New York: Paulist Press, 1977), pp. 124–140.

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The Church has sought the very roots of its own anti-Semitic tradition and begun to confront them with what can only be considered — in the view of the centuries of hatred — remarkable candor. The 1974 Vatican Guidelines debunked the old dichotomies and antitheses (law vs. grace, justice vs. love, etc.) that so tragically framed and misformed Christian understanding in the past. The Guidelines raised the question of the polemical anti-Judaic strain within the New Testament itself and called on all the forces of the Church to develop a response that would remove all possible misunderstandings of Jews and Judaism that might arise from an uninformed reading of the Sacred Texts.

This is an effort vast in scope, and staggeringly so when one considers it. Mostly, it must be admitted honestly, the hundreds of millions of believing Christians throughout the world have yet to be truly touched or turned (*teshuvah*) by the efforts thus far. It is a task that will take many years to accomplish even adequately. But a beginning, I would say, has been truly made. Whatever the future holds, the old teaching of contempt will never again hold unchallenged sway in the Church as once it did.

II. *New Forms of Anti-Semitism*

But anti-Semitism, as many scholars have shown, existed before the rise of Christianity in an ancient world that viewed monotheism as political treason against the god-emperors and Jewish beliefs and practices as menacing “difference.” Assimilated into, and spread by Christianity as it was, anti-Semitism, the world’s oldest form of racial hatred, seems to have developed a life all its own, becoming, by the 20th century, a hydra-headed cancer that can continue to infect and kill even when its “Christian” head has been completely cut off, a danger that threatens us even as Jews and Christians band together to oppose it. Like a swiftly mutating virus, anti-Semitism seemingly can produce new strains as quickly as cures are found for old ones, though each maintains a family resemblance with its forebears. It is with some of these “new-old” strains that I wish to deal.

A. The Anti-Semitism of the Right

This is an old form, which many of us thought to be dead but which is still truly with us. Recently, we have seen a dramatic rise in this country in the activities of the KKK and even, as at Skokie, of American neo-Nazis. The activities of the Klan, wherever they have occurred, have been publicly condemned by Catholic bishops³ and responsible Protestant leaders. But some anomalies persist.

3. Between March and December of 1980 alone, some five Catholic dioceses (Lafayette, Ind.; Bridgeport, Conn.; San Diego, Calif.; Louisville, Ky.; and Atlanta, Ga.) issued official condemnations of the Klan. Archbishop Thomas Donnellan, in a joint statement with Rabbi Alvin Sugarman of the Atlanta Temple, called membership in the Klan “inconsistent with the teachings of our religious heritage,” reminding Catholics that “we cannot stand idly by when the rights of others are threatened, especially when they are threatened by a group that has historically levelled the same attacks at us” (*NC News*, 12/3/80).

The Rev. Bailey Smith's unfortunate statement on the inefficacy of Jewish prayer, proclaimed not incidentally at a politically rally of ministers involved in forging the so-called "moral majority," is a rather frightening case in point. The ominous aspect is not so much the statement itself (though it is very bad theology even from the most conservative Christian point of view, as numerous Baptist leaders have since reminded the good reverend); rather, what is ominous is that his hearers, politically active ministers, did not immediately rise to protest. So "acceptable" was the statement that no one would have noticed it were it not for the presence of a tape recorder.

Which brings us to the traditional distinction between rightwing anti-Semitism in this country and in Europe. Nathan Belth, in his study of "The American Encounter with Anti-Semitism," succinctly stated the historical difference:

Anti-Semitic behavior in America has often reflected European origins, but rarely, in over three centuries, have anti-Semitic incidents attained the intensity . . . of European bigotry. Because it had few ideological roots, anti-Semitism in America rarely expressed itself in outbursts of physical violence. Religiously based antipathy to Jews, cruelly expressed in all of European history, remained muted and was felt by Jews here primarily in their social and economic lives. . . Politically inspired anti-Semitism, so devastating to European Jewry in the 19th and 20th centuries, gained no ground here . . . [T]he American political system and ideology provided immunity.⁴

Father Charles Coughlin, (perhaps the most notorious American anti-Semitic preacher of this century) for example, had a huge radio following, but he never succeeded in translating that loyalty into votes. While we cannot remain sanguine, then, in the face of obscene bumper stickers such as appeared across the country ("Burn Jews. Save Oil") following the 1973 OPEC oil embargo, there is reason for a relatively optimistic prognosis, to judge from the American past.

The same statement, however, cannot be made about the recent outbreak of anti-Semitic violence in France. *Le Monde* reported that more than 120 anti-Semitic incidents have taken place in France since 1975, twenty-seven of which included some form of violence. Two bombings, at a grocery store in Grenoble and at a bar in Marseilles, took place on the very day of the mass protest march in Paris.⁵ A lead editorial in *The New Republic* commented at the time on the more chilling implications of this phenomenon:

It suggests that anti-Semitism is still a possible ideology, a rallying cry on the political right, as it has been before in French history. Indeed, the survival of a certain sort of upper-class anti-Semitism in France may help to explain the revival of anti-Semitism in the streets. What other Western political leader could have spoken as Premier Barre did last week, when he condemned this

4. N. Belth, *A Promise to Keep* (New York: ADL, Times Books, 1979) xiii.

5. RNS, Wednesday, October 8, 1980.

odious attempted assassination of Jews which struck down innocent Frenchmen crossing the rue Copernic?⁶

Evidently, the Jews, not being "innocent" or "French" are a fair target.

The reaction of the Church to these events in "Catholic" France has been, on the other hand, straight-forward and strong. Cardinal Etchegaray of Marseilles, speaking for the French bishops' conference, said, "it is too easy for us to become indignant at (such) horrible attacks on our Jewish brethren. Too often, alas, the blame is also due to our prejudices and our ignorance about the Jewish people and their history." The U.S. bishops' statement reflects the deep concerns of the Holy See:

The Catholic community cannot be indifferent when a wave of anti-Semitic violence strikes at the Jewish people as has recently occurred in France. It is a time to stand beside them in their anguish and to reaffirm, in the words of the Second Vatican Council, our absolute opposition to all "hatred, persecutions or displays of anti-Semitism directed against Jews at any time and by anyone" (*Nostra Aetate*, no. 4).

In condemning the bombing of the synagogue in Paris, Pope John Paul II said he shared the indignation of Catholics and others in France in response to this outrage committed against the Jews. The Pope called for prayers for the innocent victims of the bombing and expressed his solidarity with the families of the dead victims and the injured. Those are the sentiments of American Catholics who join with Our Holy Father in "ardent hope that similar acts of violence may be definitely banished as unworthy of man and even more of Christians."

In its editorial on "French Terror," cited above, *The New Republic* makes two points which hint at the interrelatedness of the recent incidents in France with other aspects of anti-Semitism today. It would seem that right wing anti-Semitism can no longer be understood in isolation from its leftist and even centrist varieties:

The abject posture that the Giscard government has adopted toward oil-rich Arab states, the hostility toward Israel, the refusal to prosecute Palestinian terrorists captured in France: all this helps to create a climate for domestic ugliness. It invites rightists to seek Jewish scapegoats at home and Arab support abroad. The terrorists of Paris stand on the far right, but they apparently have made connections (and the German neo-Nazis certainly have made connections) with these two centers of international revolution.

B. The Center and the Left: Anti-Zionism or Anti-Semitism?

To the extent to which the above is true, and I have no way of verifying the relations between right and left wing extremists, but only a nagging suspicion that the allegations are correct, then we must confront the fact that we are entering a whole new era in anti-Semitic virulence. The events that have transpired in recent years in the United Nations can stand as symptomatic of the current phase of the disease, a phase in which "moderates" and "extremists" are joined together on a single issue: anti-Semitism wearing the mask of anti-Zionism.

6. *The New Republic*, (October 18, 1980): 5

In 1975, the UN passed a resolution equating Zionism with racism. This resolution was roundly condemned in many circles for the absurdity that it was. Archbishop Joseph Bernardin, speaking as President of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, for example, stated:

The resolution is unjust. Because of its substantive inadequacy it both retards the necessary struggle against racism in the world and opens the door to harrassment, discrimination and denial of basic rights to members of the Jewish community throughout the world.⁷

Not all Christian leaders, however, are so clear as Archbishop Bernardin on this issue. Many, it would seem, have accepted the PLO line that one can stand for the dismantling of the State of Israel (anti-Zionism) and still stay clear of the charge of anti-Semitism. Increasingly, it has become obvious that this is not the case.

Israel exists as the last refuge of Jews, not only from Europe after the Holocaust, but from Arab persecution as well. Indeed, more than half of the Jews in Israel today are refugees from Arab countries where, in many cases, their families had lived for generations *before* the rise of Islam. Thus, while it is true that one can criticize particular Israeli politics without in any way being anti-Semitic (Israelis do it all the time and, frankly, there is a lot to be critical of in any government, including Israel's), the "slide" into anti-Semitism, I would say, occurs whenever either of the following factors enters in:

- 1) The criticism amounts to a questioning of the right of Israel to exist. The United States has been justly criticized for its policies toward American blacks and Indians, its treatment of Japanese citizens during World War II, and over Vietnam — but nobody questioned its right *to be* on the basis of these clear crimes against humanity.
- 2) Israel is held to a stricter moral code to justify its existence than are other states. Indeed, given the process involved, Israel has a clearer legal and moral right to exist than do most nations today. Here, often enough, there is a reflection of ancient Christian theological polemics against Jews, excoriating them for not "living up" to their own Law (which the accusers never bother to try to understand, anyway). Israeli policy is often viewed through the prism of classical anti-Semitism, e.g., the charges of Israeli "intransigence" which often could be taken out of the pages of the sermons of Chrysostom on Jewish "obduracy" and the traditional polemics against the Pharisees.

Underlying many "even-handed" critiques of Israel, I fear, is the old "wandering Jew" motif, which felt a reborn Israel to be a theological impossibility since God allegedly dispersed the Jews in punishment for the "crime" of deicide.

"Even-handed" critiques are often curiously one-sided. The settlements, for example, are condemned as an unjust imposition on occupied territories. But where is the liberal Christian critique against Saudi Arabia's policy of a *Judenrein* Muslim state? Can we Christians accept on

7. NC News Service, November 11, 1975.

moral grounds such a clear policy of religious and racial discrimination?

Even among mainstream Protestants, and Catholics, I fear, a certain form of liberal anti-Semitism can be seen underlying pronouncements on the Middle East, e.g., by such bodies as the Palestine Human Rights Campaign. Such statements all too often appear to sacrifice the particularity of Jewish existence to "universal" Christian norms about what constitutes a just peace. And Israel is condemned for not living up to the ideals of her own prophets (as interpreted, of course, by Christians). As I have noted before,⁸ such statements tend to reflect of the traditional Christian refusal to deal with Judaism on its own terms, judging Judaism to be religiously flawed because it does not measure up to an ideal set of standards. Ironically, even on Christian grounds, these standards will be fully realized only in the eschaton.

The tendency to view any and every "liberation" movement of the Third World as an absolute good which can morally justify any means, including terrorism, is a flaw that has vitiated the moral integrity of many liberation theologians, Catholic and Protestant alike.

III. *The Encounter with Islam*

Finally, we in the West must learn to grapple realistically with the fact that Muslim anti-Semitism has played, and continues to play, a critical role in the Mid-East conflict. We must abandon the naive view that because the Muslim World is classified in our newspapers under the heading "Third World," Arabs and Palestinians can be viewed as pure innocents in the conflict. Israel is *not* an imposition of a solution to Western anti-Semitism on the Islamic world. As we have seen, Israel is equally a place of refuge for Jews fleeing from Arab repression.

Some of the Arab antipathy toward Jews, of course, can be seen as an importation from the West, e.g., in the Muslim assimilation of Communist propaganda about Israel and in the continuing popularity of such works as *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, originally written by the secret police of Russia under the Tsars. (Ironically, Arab "revolutionaries" like Muammar Khaddafi seem especially dependent for their views on this late excretion of Russian imperialism).

Yet, I believe it possible to establish that there exists an indigenous Muslim variety of anti-Semitism which stretches back for its roots to interpretations of negative sayings about the Jews that are found in the Qur'an itself. These have been greatly embellished in *hadith*, *shari'ah* and later popular literature throughout Muslim history. The papers of the Fourth Conference of the Academy of Islamic Research, held at Al-Azhar University in Cairo in 1970,⁹ for example, should open the eyes of anyone

8. E. Fisher, "The Uniqueness of Christian-Jewish Dialogue in the U.S. and Canada," *Ecumenical Trends*, Vol. 8:10, (November 1979): 158-160.

9. D.F. Green, ed., *Arab Theologians on Jews and Israel* (Geneva: Editions de l'Avenir, 1976). Such material, however, must be put into the perspective of the deeper attitude of tolerance

who does not realize that Islam, too, has its own “teaching of contempt,” which accuses the Jews — as Jews — of every form of depravity short of deicide, and Judaism of being a perverted religion hostile to all humanity.

There is a final complicating factor in the Middle East equation that must be faced in examining the religious roots of anti-Semitism. Arab Muslim hostility toward the State of Israel, I fear, has itself certain religious roots. It will take much dialogue with Muslim scholars to clarify this in responsible fashion. But from my admittedly slim readings on the subject it seems to me that, in the Arab view, the State of Israel is somehow a theological insult. Islam, from its beginnings as the world’s greatest success story, has had a theological view of itself as an ever-expanding *ulammah* (land and people), destined one day to encircle the planet. For even a tiny chunk of “Muslim land” to be carved out of that ever-expanding world thus poses a religious challenge for Islam’s self-understanding. As I understand the dynamics, they would work in much the same way as the theological embarrassment which Judaism’s refusal to recognize “its own” Messiah posed for the early Church. Such religious embarrassments, to judge from Christian history, can be quite dangerous to those who are perceived as causing them — i.e., in both cases, the Jews.

This less tangible factor, connected with the fact that, in Muslim eyes, Israel is actually an extension of the West’s “attacks” on Islam, beginning with the Crusades and culminating in 19th Century imperialism, makes for a particularly difficult situation in any negotiation today. I do not pretend to have the solutions. But I do find it ironic that so many of the statements of our Churches consistently ignore this factor.

Perhaps the only solution — and the one which I would strongly urge — is to engage in direct and honest dialogue with Muslims. Better, of course, would be a three-party dialogue.¹⁰ The understandings among the three great monotheistic traditions have been distorted by long centuries of mutually hostile teachings. But I do know that, until our churches begin to confront such issues, our Christian search for solutions to the Middle East situation will continue to fail to take adequately into account the felt needs of either Muslims or Jews. We must learn, as Christians, to come to grips with our own capacity for anti-Semitism and, indeed, the tragic fact that anti-Semitism today remains a key factor in political situations throughout the world. The disease has not been cured. We may have just had a brief period of remission.

within Islamic tradition and practices especially toward the “people of the book” (Christians and Jews). Indeed, Islam, perhaps reflecting the Biblical commandments on just treatment of the alien stranger, makes good relations with non-Muslims a religious obligation.

10. Such three-way relating is only now beginning among our communities, with excellent, if still tentative, results. The Kennedy Institute of Ethics at Georgetown University, for example, is sponsoring an on-going group of leading Jewish, Christian and Muslim scholars who meet twice a year in a concerted search for ways in which the three Abrahamic traditions can articulate positive religious affirmations of one another. The continued existence of this group offers dramatic evidence of the ability of all three communities to put aside ancient antagonisms for the sake of common religious hope for the future.

Black Anti-Semitism: Diagnosis and Treatment

SOL ROTH

ANTI-SEMITISM IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY — among its members and leaders alike — has been increasing in recent years at an uncomfortable pace. The phenomenon is troublesome and distressing; it is not, however, alarming. A specific brand of anti-Semitism has erupted but it is, by no means, the most violent and menacing form.

It is my intention to characterize the essential traits of black anti-Semitism, to examine some black judgments about Jews which lend it support, and to offer suggestions for a suitable response.

I

There are two Biblical models of anti-Semitism to which the Jew is obligated to respond in diverse ways. One is the Egyptian enslavement of the Israelites; the other is the Amalekite assault upon them. The former is rational (though, of course, not justifiable), at least to the extent that it was motivated by political and economic considerations. One can understand the Egyptian treatment of the Israelite even while he condemns it on moral grounds.

There arose a new king over Egypt, who knew not Joseph. And he said unto the people: "Behold the people of the children of Israel are too many and too mighty for us; come, let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there befalleth us any war, they also join themselves unto our enemies and get them up out of the land."¹

The Amalekite attack, on the other hand, was not only unjustifiable; it was not even rational. It was prompted by sadistic impulses mounted by the unprovoked Amalekites upon the weak and helpless among the children of Israel.

Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way as ye came forth out of Egypt: how he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, all that were enfeebled in thy rear, when thou wast faint and weary: and he feared not God.²

Hence, the response to the two radically different modes of anti-Semitism cannot be the same. "Thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian,"³ but, "Thou

1. Exodus 1:8-10.

2. Deuteronomy 15: 17-18.

3. Ibid. 23: 8.

shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under the heavens."⁴

Black anti-Semitism is of the ancient Egyptian variety; it is fueled primarily by political and economic factors. No doubt, there are features of the less conscionable form of anti-Semitism that also characterize it but they are essentially peripheral to the primary forces which propel it and these are economic and political in nature. Whether the battle ground which provided the occasions for outbursts of hostility was the decentralization of schools, preferential treatment, or affirmative action, black goals were economic advancement and the acquisition of political power. Even black support of the PLO is grounded in the pursuit of economic well-being. Andrew Young argued that if Israel does not make what he regards as essential concessions to Arabs, violence would continue in the Middle East, oil would inevitably be withheld from the United States and the black community would be irreparably harmed by the serious economic dislocations that would ensue.⁵

The economic and political variety of anti-Semitism is essentially temporary; it may be expected to endure as long as the basis for struggle remains. If national economic and political relationships should be rearranged, for whatever reason, into a different constellation obviating the need for continued confrontation, hostility should diminish. Certainly, as a motive force for anti-Semitism, economic and political factors lack the permanence and persistence of, for example, the charge of deicide.

It is also far less difficult for the Jewish community to cope with this type of anti-Semitism because it is empirical rather than transcendental in nature. By what experimental procedures, for example, could one rebut the charge that the Jew is the personification of the devil, an accusation made by those who engineered the Holocaust.⁶ It was a myth, powerful in its impact, and impervious to refutation. Economic and political anti-Semitism, on the other hand, has an experiential locus. Charges are available to analysis and disconfirmation; social relations are subject to change even by conscious and deliberate effort. It is clearly less difficult to do something about them.

There is another feature of the economic and political form of anti-Semitism that deserves emphasis. An anti-Semite of this variety does not normally experience a sense of superiority in relation to the object of his hostility. When hatred is inspired by the view that the Jew is a diabolical personification or that he is guilty of deicide, the anti-Semite tends to perceive his target as a pariah or, even worse, as less than human. Such a view can result in a deliberate process of dehumanization and murder in holocaust proportions. When animosity derives from competition in the market place, a sense of superiority is not normally its con-

4. Ibid. 25: 19.

5. Carl Gershman, "The Andrew Young Affair," *Commentary*, (Nov. 1979): 26.

6. Lucy S. Dawidowicz, *The War Against the Jews* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975), p. 19.

comitant. It is true that black leaders have, on occasion, erupted with charges that do imply the moral inferiority of the Jew. They have accused him of dual loyalty, of being the slumlord, of defending and preserving the racial *status quo*. These, however, appear to be peripheral to their central concern, to wit, not to be opposed in their efforts to secure a prominent place in the political and economic sun. Certainly, a community that is striving to prove that black is beautiful and that it is entitled to equality will not normally make a claim of superiority.

It is also important to note that the economic and political form of anti-Semitism could affect a segment of the population not readily vulnerable to other types. It has been observed that anti-Semitism is most often the concomitant of ignorance and that well-educated people, because they are less prone to accept myths and stereotypes, will more successfully resist prejudice and bigotry. One observer of Black-Jewish relations noted, however, that

[t]he figures reporting a rise in anti-Jewish feeling among the best educated and best informed numbers of the black community came as a surprise to social scientists and community relations experts who had long held that a high degree of education was closely correlated with a lessening of anti-Semitic prejudice . . . Yet the precise contrary seems to be the case among the most highly educated blacks.⁷

This phenomenon need not surprise us. It is the most educated and the best informed in the black community who experience frustration most when their aspirations for economic advancement are not realized. And while some would expect that education would prevent envy and frustration from turning into hostility, it is well known that men, even of the cerebral variety, are not necessarily rational in conduct, that is, their actions are often guided by emotion rather than by logic.

II

Black anti-Semitism, while rooted in economic and political considerations, derives nourishment from certain judgments about the Jewish community which are essentially mistaken.

One is that American Jews do not constitute a minority. This conception is based on a peculiar, though not a novel, interpretation of the meaning of "minority." This term normally connotes a quantitative character and refers to a social class in a society which is considerably smaller than the other classes. According to this definition, the term should apply most appropriately to the Jewish community which, in the United States, is less than 3% of the population. This statistic notwithstanding, the Jewish community has been excluded by many from the category of "minority." This first came to me as a surprise when, in a dialogue with

7. Murray Friedman, "Black Anti-Semitism on the Rise," *Commentary*, (Oct. 1979): 31-2.

Catholic clergy that took place more than a decade ago, I was informed that, because of the economic prosperity of the Jewish community, it could not qualify for minority classification. It is a view often held by government officials. A petition from a group of Hassidic Jews seeking official status as a minority in order to gain access to federal aid was opposed by Representative Parren J. Mitchell, author of the legislation under which the Hassidim were seeking assistance, on the grounds that it was intended primarily to aid Blacks and Hispanics.⁸ Hassidim did not belong to a community which was economically disadvantaged.⁹ The term "minority" has come to denote a qualitative characteristic; it appears now to refer essentially to a group's impoverished condition.

This transformation in definition and conception is unfortunate. Instead of regarding themselves as in the same category as Jews because of a common minority status, a perception that would contribute to unity and strengthen both communities, Blacks perceive themselves as belonging to another classification. A minority consisting of about 10% of the population sees itself as confronting a "fearsome" majority consisting of about 3% of the population. In truth, there is more that unites than divides. Prosperity notwithstanding, given the experience of Jewish history, the fact of its minority status, at least in quantitative terms, brings to the Jewish community a sense of anxiety and insecurity that is characteristic of minority existence.

Another fallacious view that is sometimes enunciated is that Jews are oppressors. This claim is made particularly with respect to Israel. So Andrew Young declared that, while in the past Blacks were convinced that "Jews were oppressed people," they "now believe that the Palestinians are oppressed and will act accordingly."¹⁰ We can understand why this transformation in the image of the Jew occurred. The Jewish community today has two sources of strength available to it. One is economic, in the form of an impressive degree of prosperity; the other is political, in the form of a Jewish state. A distortion of the first leads to the view that the Jew is the slumlord; a distortion of the second yields the conclusion that the Jew is cruel. Both result in the judgment that the Jew is an oppressor. Particularly in Israel is the Jew vulnerable to this twisting of facts out of their real shape because he constitutes the majority even in a quantitative sense, and, to the extent that the laws of even a democratic nation largely reflect the interests of the majority, the minority can easily interpret the normal liabilities of minority status as oppression.

Too much needs to be said by way of countering this charge and this forum is not an appropriate place for it, but one observation may not be out of order. Many black leaders who are guilty of hostility to the Jew

8. *Newsday*, Mar. 10, 1980.

9. It was not Hassidic traits that were taken to define the community to which they belonged, but Jewish characteristics.

10. Gershman, *Loc. cit.*

grant that Jewish commitment to civil rights surpasses that of other groups in the United States.

Even these black leaders interviewed in the 1978 Harris survey who expressed negative sentiments towards Jews conceded that Jews have a greater commitment to civil rights than Americans generally. And at about the same time Harris pollsters were doing their interviewing, a N.Y. Times-CBS survey of voters found Jews to be the most liberal group on the whole range of issues affecting the black community.¹¹

Jewish conduct is still often prompted by universalistic principles of morality, despite the occurrence of prejudice in the Jewish community, and it is gratifying to note that, in sober and objective moments, this truth is acknowledged even by many who harbor anti-Semitic sentiments.

Another erroneous judgment of black leaders is that, in the past, Jews rallied to the cause of civil rights exclusively because of self-interest and that there was no genuine commitment on their part to the well-being of Blacks. It is a claim that is difficult to refute because it challenges, not Jewish action, but Jewish motives. It is admitted that the Jew has an exemplary record of support for causes that serve the black community; it is argued, however, that his actions were self-serving. Granted, it is possible to be altruistic and unselfish for self-regarding reasons. I believe nevertheless, that the allegation is false. There are instances where it is, at least, plausible to assume the identity of motive and action as, for example, when Jews marched for civil rights in places like Selma, knowing that they exposed themselves to danger, even to the loss of life. It is true that those people who engaged in the civil rights struggle derived personal satisfaction from their involvement, but that satisfaction hinged, by and large, not on the prospect of personal gain, but on the knowledge that they were conducting their lives in conformity with ethical principles to which they were committed. Jews know what it means to live by moral imperatives.

It may be granted that the efforts of Jews in certain areas, affirmative action, for example, are motivated by the concern that they not lose opportunities to which they think they are entitled. Two observations, however, may help to place this phenomenon in perspective. First, the fact that Jews are, in many instances, prodded by considerations of self-interest does not preclude the possibility of their exhibiting unselfishness in other contexts. Second, in cases like that of affirmative action which, in the perception of many, is equivalent to the imposition of quotas, the struggle is seen as also a drive to preserve the democratic way of life. And I dare say that most Jews tend to regard the preservation of democracy as a more important goal than the achievement of economic well-being.

III

I should like to offer certain guidelines which, if implemented, would contribute to greater harmony in Black-Jewish relations in the years to come.

11. Friedman, *Op. cit.*, p. 34.

First, the Jew should respond to black anti-Semitism with a degree of calmness and equanimity. Any anti-Semitic event must be perceived in the context in which it occurs. A declaration by a black leader that the Jew seeks control of society does not require the same intensity of response as an identical charge made, for example, by a Nazi. The motivations are different and do not present the same threat. There is, in addition, a tendency to exaggerate the event at the moment when it occurs and, consequently, to overact. We ought to respond rationally and not journalistically to anti-Semitic eruptions. Thus, a Gallup poll, two weeks after the Andrew Young resignation and notwithstanding inflammatory comments by black leaders, revealed that a larger percentage of black Americans were sympathetic to Israel than to Arab nations.¹² The results of a study conducted subsequently by Data Black indicated that the vast majority of Blacks harbor no ill will to Jews.¹³ To have retaliated in kind to the reckless and irresponsible declaration made by some black leaders at the time of the resignation might have provided the Jew with an emotional catharsis but no gain in his relations with Blacks or in his status in the United States. In responding with exemplary calmness to this crisis, the Jewish community revealed itself to be mature and responsible. That reaction is a model for the future.

In line with the need to maintain perspective, it is necessary to note the desirability of emphasizing the views and attitudes that Jews share with Blacks even while a dispute rages over points of disagreement. Thus, a summary of some results of a dialogue of black and Jewish leaders sponsored by the Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles, reveals that while Jews and Blacks differ as to whether Israel should agree to talk to the PLO, they are at one in believing that violence is senseless, terrorism is not to be tolerated, Israel should be supported, the resolution equating Zionism with racism must be repudiated and that the UN ought to be condemned for isolating Israel.¹⁴ An awareness of areas of agreement is indispensable to the preservation of a balanced perspective and to success in the effort to relieve existing tensions.

Second, it is necessary to engage in dialogue at all levels, but particularly on the college campus, and for two reasons. One is as has been noted, that in the black community, because its hostility is rooted in economic and political factors, it is the most educated who are vulnerable to anti-Semitism. They have the highest expectations and, therefore, the highest level of frustrations. But, further, it is very difficult to engage in dialogue unless the participants are open to each other, and openness is most likely to be available on the college campus which normally breeds a climate of objectivity, rationality and receptivity. Those with hardened attitudes and strong prejudices will not even listen. If they do not resist the encounter,

12. Gershman, *Op. cit.* p. 29.

13. *N.Y. Daily News*, Jan. 19, 1980.

14. *Israel Today*, Jan. 3, 1980

they will close their minds to the discussion. It is desirable to initiate dialogue, even engage in confrontation, when minds are most accessible.

Third, if there is still such a tendency, and there may not be, it is desirable that Jews avoid the posture of paternalism in contacts with Blacks. One can exhibit an air of superiority even while he expresses concern for the well being of another, and the manifestation of superiority is resented whether it is accompanied by exploitation or compassion.

The judgment of superiority — implicit or explicit — is, of course, unjustifiable. It is unacceptable on moral grounds. In addition, any criterion by which the judgment may be made itself requires justification, and the effort to do so may not be successful. In any event, and certainly from the point of view of improving human relations, the recognition of Blacks as responsible and independent personalities is indispensable to the cultivation of mutual respect.

IV

I do not know what confrontations still lie in store for the black and Jewish communities in the years ahead, but I am confident that, with the passing of time, relations will improve. Jews and Blacks, because of their respective conditions in American society, are natural allies.

Black-Jewish Relations: A Two-Way Street

NATHAN PERLMUTTER

RATHER THAN POSSIBLY BLUR THE FOCUS OF my views in an essay necessarily hampered by the limitation of available time and of literary style, I prefer responding directly to questions that have been posed. Herewith then, several of the questions and my answers.

Q. *What is the present state of Black-Jewish relations in America?*

A. I view the status of Black-Jewish relations as being more a subject of concern to Jews than to Blacks. Perhaps because Jews are given to taking the temperature of their acceptance while Blacks are more concerned with gaining station.

For the average Black, my surmise is that Jews are not a preoccupation of consequence. Similarly, and with the abatement of press coverage of frictions, the converse is becoming true for Jews, too. The two groups are simply not as relevant to each other as they were during the civil rights era when Jews were amongst the few activist allies Blacks had.

For professional agency Blacks and Jews, the current state of the relationship is less a relationship, certainly is less intimate, than it was a decade ago. The fall-out from the Andrew Young affair revealed, did not establish, this truth. Anti-Semitic rhetoric geysered from Black spokesmen, suggesting that it had been bubbling and boiling for some time, and suggesting, too, that Andrew Young's departure simply pulled the cork. The deteriorating relationship was further weakened by the few, so very few, Black spokesmen who disavowed the newly unleashed Black racism. That some Blacks suggested that, for them to speak up would cause a loss of their credibility in the Black community was understandable as a tactic, but was a melancholy insight, nonetheless.

Beyond the state of relations between ordinary Blacks and Jews and between their professional agencies, there is the question of hinted-at relationships as implied in the findings of opinion surveys. The surveys that I have seen suggest that Jews continue to support anti-discrimination measures, have not retreated from support for affirmative action (short of racial quotas), and continue to advocate programs designed to help the disadvantaged. The mainstream of Black opinion correspondingly seems to be supportive of positive attitudes towards Jews. There is, however, a disturbing "but" in Black attitudes. The younger and more educated the Black, the less likely he is to hold favorable views of Israel and of Jews.

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This is an attitudinal phenomenon. Generally, the younger and the more educated survey respondents are, the less anti-Jewish they are. Among Blacks, the reverse seems to be true.

Q. *What new patterns in this area are likely to emerge in the next decade?*

A. A decade is a long time. So much that cannot now be known may happen. Events, for instance, which may not be clearly labeled "Jew" or "Black" but which may, nonetheless, impact upon and fashion Black-Jewish attitudes toward each other. Given that younger, more educated Blacks tend to favor Third World nations of color, the evolvement of the relationship between these nations and the Arab nations, in the context of Arab-Israeli relations, will certainly affect Black-Jewish relations in the United States.

Should the Reagan administration make good on its campaign promises to roll back the quota system, will Black rhetoric scapegoat the Jewish community?

In several American metropolises, Blacks and Jews live in close proximity to each other. Should government funding for social programs be cut back — for reasons as worthy as budget balancing and containing inflation — and the immediate consequences negatively impact on Blacks, will the inevitable social tensions extend to Black-Jewish relations?

Having raised these considerations by way of hedging my answer, I nonetheless do foresee new patterns of relations. The old patterns were based on our respective identities as Jews and as Blacks. As Jews, we were for civil rights. The Jew in us propelled us to speak out, to march, to vote, in order to break down racial barriers to first class citizenship. We had been there, so to speak, and so, as Jews, we knew that discrimination was painful and that it was wrong. Similarly, Blacks related to us on these issues precisely because they were Blacks. Had they not been Black, they would not have been discriminated against. It was that simple, that fragile, our relationship — one forged in discrimination, the direct consequence of our being Jews and of their being Blacks.

But racial discrimination in housing, employment, education, hotels, restaurants, government service, voting, is now illegal. Indeed, today's quota system penalizes whites! Still, as is plainly evident, Blacks have not yet entered the mainstream in numbers sufficient to dilute the blackness of ghettos, the blackness of poverty, the blackness of both the victims and the perpetrators of street crimes.

So it is that a new pattern of Black-Jewish relations which I foresee is one that will be issue-related, rather than one that is essentially race-and religion-centered. Blackness no longer being as dominant a causal factor in poverty as once it was, Jews will continue to support measures that are aimed at ameliorating the circumstances of the disadvantaged — because they are disadvantaged, rather than because they are Black. In short, sympathy based on color will no longer come as automatically as once it did.

Q. What mistakes have been made by Blacks and/or Jews, individually and collectively, during the seventies?

A. It's idle to talk of mistakes, at least of collective mistakes. The dynamics of evolving relationships between social groups are far more complex than the term "mistake" would suggest. Group attitudes are more likely an outgrowth of group interest than of decisions made by persons. A person can make a mistake. A social evolution has an inevitableness about it that may be unfortunate, but to label it a mistake suggests that someone, somewhere, at sometimes might have made another kind of decision leading to another dénouement. That's not history's way.

However, if instead of talking of mistakes, we discussed "what might have been," I would suggest the following random mishaps.

If, in the late 1960s, the Jewish community had openly and vigorously opposed the so-called Philadelphia Plan which established racial quotas for hiring construction workers, the quota system might not have reached the proportions that it has. Furthermore, the rollback of the quota system now in the offing, and its resultant likely abrasions, would not be programmed into our tomorrows. The "mistake" here was that in the Jewish compassion for the victims of discrimination, too many of us failed to understand that, in a nation of law, bad precedents outlive good intentions and, down the line, they oppress new victims. (I have always suspected that liberals' acceptance of the Philadelphia Plan's quota system was attributable to the fact that the Plan favored Negroes, a fashionable minority, and victimized Italians, an unfashionable minority.) No matter that surveys revealed that most Blacks opposed racial quotas; as the system grew, those who benefited from it developed vested interests in it. An element of current Black-Jewish hostility was thus sown.

If, on another level and at another time, more Jewish spokesmen had joined ADL in quickly and forthrightly labeling as anti-Semitic the vulgar fulminations of positioned Black leaders in the wake of the Andrew Young affair, numbers of key Black leaders who were appalled by the surfacing anti-Semitism would have been encouraged to denounce it more vigorously themselves. (How clearly and resonantly we denounced Dr. Bailey Smith. How circumspectly we reacted to Andrew Young's failure to clear the air that he himself fouled.) As is, our circumspection left bullhorns free for relatively unchallenged anti-Semitism. I note that, in a recent survey, Jesse Jackson is regarded as the first or second most popular leader in the Black community.

Q. What should be done by each community with regard to the future?

A. I am half prompted to encapsulate my answer with the well-worn admonition that we ought do unto others as we would have them do unto us. And while it is seriously intended, it is, by itself, an evasion of the question. I believe that our Jewish community will continue to support social and political programs that are both compassionate and racially equitable. I would hope, however, that, as individuals, we will discern the

difference between programs that are touted as being racially responsive and racially neutral programs that may actually succeed in helping those who are in need, many, but not all, of whom, are racial minorities.

For instance, I have seen no current evidence to suggest that the epidemic proportion of unemployment among Black youths is attributable to employment discrimination based on race. It is attributable to an amalgam of factors, such as our government's economic policies, the sociology of family life in the black ghettos, etc. If, as concerned citizens, we are to be helpful to these young people, we must lower the banners that we carried for civil rights battles already won, and turn ourselves to the more complex and currently more relevant questions of economics and sociology. Economics may seem a far cry from Black-Jewish alliances, but finding good economic answers will be more helpful to poor Blacks and to Black-White, let alone Black-Jewish relations, than a thousand and one nights of Black-Jewish dialogue.

There are other "for instances" in which fraternity can be served, but which require the shedding of once appropriate, but no longer centrally relevant, attitudes. Forced racial segregation is wrong. But does it follow that indiscriminate forced busing to achieve color integration is necessarily right? Should not alliances that fought segregation in education now turn their attention to allying on the quality of education? After all, no less an authority than James S. Coleman has found that it is a "mistaken belief" that Black students learn better in integrated classrooms.

In some places "law and order" was used as a cover for police brutalization of Black activists seeking their due rights as Americans. Does it follow that a concern with law and order is necessarily racist? Statistics reveal that Blacks dominate the lists as victims of lawlessness — at the hands of Blacks. Should not alliances that fought police brutality now turn their efforts to support of Law and Order? And will not both Black and White citizenry be the resultant beneficiaries?

And if these illustrations of future agendas are suggested for the consideration of Jews and Blacks, I have at least one suggestion for Blacks.

Blacks have frequently, sometimes eloquently, sometimes angrily, cried out for attention to that which, deep down, anguishes their "soul." The advances of the past two decades suggest that whites and, certainly, Jews, have heard and have been, if not totally, certainly substantially, even if clumsily, responsive. Laws evidence this, court decisions underscore it, attitudinal surveys support it.

I would like to suggest that Blacks, understandably preoccupied with the Black agenda, pause and listen closely to what anguishes other hearts, other "souls." We are none of us single-dimensioned. We are all of us with the capacity, in both mind and heart, to hear and to be responsive to the calls of others — or at least of neighbors and friends. I would like to see motions introduced, resolutions passed, delegations sent to Washington by mainstream Black organizations in behalf of — yes, I'll say it plainly — a

Jewish agenda. Let me widen and deepen my candor. Jewish organizations, profoundly concerned as they are with the Jewish agenda — Israel, anti-Semitism, Jewish identity, assimilation, the needs of our elderly and of our young — somehow have not been so preoccupied, so exclusively self referent, that we have not found the time, the empathy, the conviction to speak out against racism.

And while the future of Jewish responses to the Black community will inexorably be a continuation of our past commitment to equal rights and to our past support for those in need, and while this means that we will do what is right because it is right, still it would be nice to read a ringing denunciation by a mainline Black organization of the racism implicit in the new quota system. Time was when Roy Wilkins did just that. And if Black short-term interest is viewed by Black leaders as being inextricably intertwined with the new quota system and *realpolitik* in Black organizational life renders such candor politically hazardous, there are other signals from mainline Black organizations that would make for welcome news. Loud, clear, repeated condemnations of the United Nations' offenses against the Jewish people; loud, clear, repeated contradictions of the National Council of Churches' skewed reports on the Middle East; delegations to Washington supportive of Israel's security. After all, friendship no less than love should be required.

The Medium Has A Message: Television, Israel, and the People of the Book

M. ETHAN KATSH

THE STATE OF ISRAEL AND TELEVISION ARE contemporaries. 1948 was both the year of the establishment of the Jewish state and the year in which the great expansion of television began. In 1948, the number of television sets in the United States increased from 100,000 to 1,000,000. By 1958, the number had risen to 50,000,000.¹ The premise of this paper is that this chronological coincidence, although generally unrecognized, is highly significant. The ability of television to transmit information instantaneously, visually, and over great distances has been a continuing influence on the State of Israel. The unique qualities of television have caused Israel's past and future development to be different from what it would have been in an age of print only. Moreover, because of the theological significance of Israel, whatever impact television has on the State also influences the Jewish religion.

Judaism, in the past, was sensitive to, and influenced by, the special nuances of different forms of communication. As a community which has been called "the people of the book," it has evidently enjoyed a close association with the written word. Its developmental period, approximately three thousand years ago, coincided with the invention of a written alphabet and its holiest object is still a handwritten scroll. Even its "oral law" has been in written form for over a thousand years. Less obviously, but perhaps more importantly, various Jewish values and concepts are linked with the habits of thought of the literate mind and with the special qualities of writing and print. Although the new media will not cause the traditional forms of communication to disappear, the unique and potent qualities of these new inventions, and the radically different ways in which they communicate information, promise to cause profound changes in many institutions. It is, therefore, particularly important to understand the nature of the new media and to examine whether and how these modern miracles may affect a religious civilization with ancient roots in the traditional media.

I. The Influence of Communications Media on Society

The two most ardent proponents of the long term influence of communications on society have been Marshall McLuhan and his late

1. Leo Bogart, "The Growth of Television," in *Mass Communications*, edited by W. Schramm (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1960), pp. 95-111.

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colleague and mentor, Harold Innis.² Innis argues that the use of a new medium of communication alters the distribution of information in a society and, as a consequence, its social structure. The development of writing, for example, led to societies being more hierarchical, since writing was a skill that only persons in power were apt to possess. Anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss has noted that writing's first uses were connected first and foremost with power. It was used for inventories, catalogues, censuses, laws and instructions. In all instances, whether the aim was to keep a check on material possessions or on human beings, it is evidence of the power exercised by some men over other men.³

Information in such societies, therefore, tended to flow down from the top rather than from citizens and groups to other citizens and groups.

With the invention of printing and the subsequent spread of literacy, information began to be disseminated to broader sectors of the population. The change which resulted from information flowing across classes as well as from the upper class downward, led to challenges to the traditional social order. It encouraged the development of liberal political theories and to increased demands for the protection of rights and for limits on state power.

The second main theme in Innis' writings is the influence of media on the concepts of time and space. Innis categorizes both media and societies as being either time-oriented or space-oriented. Speech, for example, is a time-oriented medium since it can be used to carry on a tradition, but is a poor medium for traversing large distances. He argues, therefore, that oral societies were highly concerned with the local community and its history, traditions, religion, and culture. Space-oriented media, such as print, by contrast are light and easily transportable, and, therefore, they encourage expansion over larger areas, leading to the growth of secular states and a concern for the present and the future. For Innis, a society's media determines its fundamental values and forms of organization. Western society, under this theory, had originally been time-oriented (speech), began to become space-oriented with the invention of writing, and became largely space-oriented with the development of printing.

McLuhan, unlike Innis, sees media more as devices which alter perceptual habits than as conveyors of information. He speculates that different media require the use of different senses and that, depending on which senses are used, individual and, ultimately, societal habits of thought are affected. The transformation of an oral culture into a literate one involves more, for McLuhan, than an increase in the amount of available information. When one talks to someone face to face, all of a

2. McLuhan's primary works are *The Gutenberg Galaxy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962) and *Understanding Media* (New York: New American Library, 1964). Innis' main writings on communications are *Empire and Communications* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950) and *The Bias of Communication* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1951).

3. "Interview with Claude Levi-Strauss," in *The Future of Literacy*, edited by Robert Disch (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1973), p. 18.

person's senses may be used. Reading, however, uses only the eye. The effect of this, according to McLuhan, is profound. One who obtains information from a printed page rather than from another human being acquires new personality traits. He learns to think abstractly, to "act without reacting," and to confront social issues and problems in a detached, uninvolved and impersonal way. Typography, McLuhan asserts, separates the senses and, therefore, thought from feeling. These traits contribute to a society which values rationality, uniformity, individuality, and systematic and abstract thought.

This effect of typography on personality and societal characteristics, says McLuhan, is heightened by the particular format of the printed page. The pages of the first printed books looked very much like those of manuscripts. The typeface used was similar to a written script since that was what individuals were accustomed to reading. After a period of years, however, printed pages began to look different from manuscripts. The printed page, like this one, acquired a uniform and orderly look to it. The societal effect of this change is that

once a culture uses such a medium for a few centuries, it begins to perceive the world in a one-thing-at-a-time, abstract, linear, fragmented, sequential way. And it shapes its organizations and schools according to the same premises. The form of print has become the form of thought.⁴

There is one more explanation of the influence of media which is relevant to a discussion of the cultural influence of television. This view holds that different media have different abilities to transmit some kinds of information and, therefore, affect the kind of information available in society. Abstract ideas and concepts, for example, are much more easily communicated in print than in televised form, whereas for portraying violent conflict or farcical humor, the opposite is true. Different media have different strengths. Each medium acts as a filter, letting some kinds of information through easily, some with difficulty, and some not at all. Depending on which media are dominant in society, certain kinds of information will be communicated more often and become important in society while others will become less so.

II. Media Theories and Jewish History

Jewish tradition, based on a history that is heavily oriented around writing and print, provides an interesting testing ground for the validity of the various theories discussed above.

A. Media and the flow of information

Biblical society, although it had various egalitarian concerns, was clearly hierarchical. The political, legal and religious systems that it estab-

⁴John Cullin, "A Schoolman's Guide to Marshal McLuhan," in *McLuhan: Pro and Con*, edited by R. Rosenthal (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1968), pp. 249-250.

lished were derived from the fact that the original flow of information was in a vertical direction, from the divine down to the people. Here is some support for Innis's theory that the structure of a society will reflect the direction in which information flows.

The use of a written scroll to which was ascribed a divine origin, however, also led to a characteristic which was unique among ancient societies which relied on writing. That the scroll was written provided it with some permanence, while its divine nature meant that it could not be changed by humans, even those at the top of the hierarchy. Rights which were enumerated might often be ignored by those who acquired power, but they could not be permanently abolished. The concept of a right, therefore, became meaningful for the first time in human history. As T.H. Huxley once wrote,

down to modern times, no state had a constitution in which the interests of the people are so largely taken into account, in which the duties so much more than the privileges of rulers are insisted upon, as that drawn up for Israel.⁵

A "right" and "writing," therefore, may have a relationship that is more than phonetic. Although rights which are written down are not necessarily guaranteed, rights which are not in writing are generally less secure.

B. Media and cultural stability

Jewish reliance on writing and print also provides support for the theory that cultural stability depends on creatively balancing time-oriented and space-oriented media. As a culture that has existed for several thousand years, Judaism provides one of the best examples of survival. It has endured for most of the last two millennia, not on its own territory, but as a multinational entity whose parts were located in many places. Its prospects for survival were not very promising and the fact that it did survive is explainable in part by its use of media. In particular, it used the Torah, a written scroll, to foster both a concern with the past and a relationship with persons in distant places.

The time-orienting power of the Torah, however, is more potent and easier to understand than its unifying power over space. The weekly reading of the scroll conditions an awareness of, and a relationship with, ancient happenings. Like most religious rituals, it enables participants to perform an act in the same way it was performed by previous generations. The space-binding ability of the Torah derives from the detailed rules concerning how the scroll must be cared for and copied. Its sacred nature and the rigid requirements for copying it make it certain that all copies are identical. Thus, unlike almost any manuscript for which many copies are in existence, and unlike even most printed books, the scroll contains no

5. Cited in *The Pentateuch*, J. H. Hertz, ed. (London: Soncino Press, 1937), p. 927.

typographical errors. This fact and the ritual of reading it provide a common identity to Jews regardless of where they are located.

In acknowledging that the Torah scroll performs a space-binding function, however, it should also be admitted that its success in this role is due to the fact that it fulfills only a limited purpose. The Torah preserved a common identity among distant people but it could not create uniformity or identical forms of practice in different places. There are many variations in ritual, custom, and even belief. Writing, as ancient emperors learned, is not an ideal tool for the administration of large land areas. Printing is far superior, as the development of modern nations states after the invention of printing indicates. Writing, however, as Jewish history illustrates, can, under special circumstances, create a common consciousness and preserve an identity even among people who have never directly communicated with each other.

C. Media and individual perception

McLuhan's argument that the format of a page of print can influence both individual perception and social thought is the most speculative media theory, the one most difficult to document, and the one that receives the least support from Jewish history. McLuhan treats printing as a form of communication critically different from writing and the question, therefore, is whether new philosophical perspectives and orientations appeared in the centuries following Gutenberg. For Judaism, the changes caused by printing were probably not of the magnitude of those which occurred in secular society. This does not necessarily disprove the theory, since a religion may be more bound to the past than is the general culture, and Judaism already reflected many of the habits of thought of a literate people. There is, however, one intriguing example in the history of the printing of the Talmud which provides some confirmation of McLuhan's argument.

The first printed edition of the Talmud was published in the late fifteenth century, a few decades after Gutenberg. Then, in 1523, an unusual publishing event occurred. In that year, the Talmud was printed in Venice in a format which has not materially changed to the present day. The placement of the text in the center with the commentaries surrounding it, a style which had been used previously for printing Justinian's code and its commentaries, is still obediently followed.⁶ Some new commentaries may be added in the margin or in the back of volumes, but the page numbering system and how the page is arranged remain constant.

Certain values are reinforced merely by the format in which the text is presented. The lack of change and the orderliness are, at least in the minds of traditionalists, two important attributes of the Talmud itself. In

6. John Wigmore, *A Panorama of the World's Legal Systems* (St. Paul: West Publishing Co., 1928), Vol. 3, p. 993.

fact, however, it has changed over the years and is much less orderly than it appears in print.

Like all books copied by hand, manuscript versions of the Talmud were not error free. Copyists may have misread the manuscript they were copying from, local traditions may have been inserted, and censors may have required certain deletions. In addition, when the Talmud was still in manuscript form, it was very often studied from memory, with the result that local traditions at variance with the text may have been remembered and followed. The printing of the Talmud gave the version on paper much greater authority and, therefore, halted the process of change which had been occurring, albeit inadvertently, when the tradition was primarily oral.

The Talmud is not orderly in that it is not a logically arranged code of rules and regulations, but it more closely resembles the record of a congressional debate. It contains discussions of points of law, and summaries there, in which the participants felt free, in supporting an opinion, to inject any idea or story, however irrelevant it may have seemed, and then to spend time discussing the new subject. The tone and style are of oral discourse and there is not the formal structure of material prepared for publication in printed form. The stylized printed format which is now obediently and universally used has encouraged attempts to rationalize the material, has highlighted the linear and orderly qualities that it contains, and has given it an appearance that is at variance with its content.

III. The State of Israel and Television

During the stateless period of Jewish history, sacred writings provided a link with the past and a medium for creating a legal order. Writing and print, therefore, performed some of the unifying functions ordinarily achieved by a homeland. The concerns of a people without a land, however, are very different from those of a nation with a land. The establishment of the State raises challenging issues concerning its relationship to Jews outside the country and regarding the meaning of the State for the religion. The resolution of these issues has been, and will continue to be, greatly affected by the new communications technologies, particularly television, which, thus far, has been helpful for the development of the State.

One of the differences between television and the traditional media is that it makes distance irrelevant. Events occurring almost anywhere in the world can be viewed instantaneously and are often reported just as promptly thousands of miles from the event as they are locally. National boundaries, therefore, lose much of their significance as obstacles to international communication. As Professor Ithiel de Sola Pool has noted, "barriers of time and space that once protected the status quo are easily

penetrated or circumvented by modern media"⁷ and there can now be the formation of heretofore impossible relationships among distant groups. The world has become "not a global village so much as a series of non-homogeneous pockets of identity,"⁸ some of which have common interests and, with capabilities of the new forms of communications, can now be expected to develop novel types of relationships with each other. The exact nature of these relationships will become clear only over time. Several examples, however, can already be provided and they each suggest a threat to the hegemony of the nation-state, a political form which, as Daniel Boorstin has noted, developed after the advent of printing.⁹ Multinational corporations, for example, have already demonstrated how economic organizations can use new communications technologies to ignore the boundaries of political entities and coordinate activities in different parts of the world.¹⁰ Political doctrines which are related to distance are also threatened. The concept of non-interference in the domestic affairs of another country, for example, loses meaning when lobbying can be conducted from afar or when, as in the case of Iran, a religious leader thousands of miles away could direct a revolution by using radio and tapes.

The development of Israel and its relationship to American Jewry is another illustration of the people-linking boundary-jumping power of the new media. The primary medium employed previously, the written scroll which described a common past and which emphasized religious values, has been joined by electronic media which focus on the present, emphasize the secular, and allow occurrences in different places to be shared experiences. Thus, America Jewry can become even more involved with Israel because it is now possible to share events taking place there as they occur, and vice versa.

This involvement of American Jewry, it should be emphasized, includes more than material assistance or attempts at influencing political policy. By carrying information in two directions, the new media foster awareness of a bond between the two communities, promote a recognition that each is in some way dependent on the welfare of the other, and create common emotional reactions to many events. Financial contributions to Israel are only the tangible part of a new kind of linkage that is difficult to describe in traditional terms and that has not yet evolved into its final form, but which is slowly changing the concept of diaspora.

The involvement of American Jewry with Israel has been one of the

7. Ithiel de Sola Pool, "Direct Broadcast Satellites and the Integrity of National Cultures," in *National Sovereignty and International Communication*, edited by Kaarle Nordenstreng and Herbert Schiller (Norwood, N.J.: Ablex Publishing Co., 1979), p. 123.

8. Vine Deloria, *God is Red* (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1973), p. 78.

9. Address by Dr. Daniel Boorstin, Dedication of the National Humanities Center at North Carolina Research Triangle Park, April 16, 1977.

10. Richard J. Barnett and Ronald Muller, *Global Reach* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974).

assets that Israel has enjoyed in the conflict with its neighbors. It is interesting that bordering Arab states, which may have received more material aid from allies than Israel has, probably derive little benefit from the new media. The reason is that conflicts among Arab countries are not caused by distance-related barriers but by ideological and other reasons.

In a second important way, the bridge built by television has proved to be an important influence on the Arab-Israeli conflict. Because television has been used as a major medium for communicating news of the Middle East, some aspects of the conflict have been given more attention than if a different medium had been employed. Television highlights those issues which are most easily communicated by visual and oral means. The content of television programs is determined not only by economic considerations and popular desires; the technological and artistic limitations of the medium encourage it to focus on those events, values, and aspects of life which a small screen can easily transmit and avoid those which are difficult to capture visually. The following list, drawn mainly from Jerry Mander's intriguing book, *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television*, points out what is frequently dealt with on television and what rarely receives treatment:¹¹

<i>Emphasized</i>	<i>Neglected</i>
War	Peace
Violence	Non-Violence
Conflict	Agreement
Verbal	Sensory
Quantity	Quality
Fixed	Ambiguous
Large	Small
Material	Spiritual
Results	Processes

It is not surprising, therefore, that television has covered war in the Middle East so much more effectively than the attempts at peace. War is a matter of territory, armaments, soldiers, and strategy, all of which can be shown visually, using film, diagrams, or simulations. The drama of the conflict comes through fairly well on the small screen. The geographical position of Israel, surrounded by neighbors who are hostile, many times larger in land area, and much greater in population, is also ideal for visual presentation. The more often this dramatic image is communicated, the more sympathy and support Israel can be expected to have even among the general American public.

Peace, however, involves more than territory; it also concerns abstractions and complicated legalities. The differences between Israel and her neighbors over concepts like "self rule," "self determination," "autonomy," and "sovereignty," for example, are difficult to portray

11. Jerry Mander, *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television* (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1978), pp. 323-328.

visually. It is questionable whether anyone who derives news solely from television, as does fifty percent of the population, can fully understand the nature of the disagreements surrounding these issues,¹² since, even during peace negotiations, television tends to highlight areas of disagreement rather than agreement and focuses on personalities rather than process. The parties invariably succumb to the power of the camera. For the benefit of American television viewers, Begin and Sadat, for example, each make statements in English and answer questions in English during press briefings in their own countries. The power of an American president, who would prefer to see no statements made, and was able to achieve this at Camp David, pales at the power of the television camera to evoke responses which are in the interest of neither country.

The importance of this relationship between Israel and television is twofold. First, television is a bridge between distant countries that has increased communication and made new relationships possible. Second, this invisible bridge has given priority to some types of traffic over others. In general, the kind of information portrayable on television has benefited Israel for the past thirty years, but this pattern could change in the near future. Peace in the area would decrease the amount of attention paid to Israel and, as attention is focused on other areas, this shift alone might reduce some of the support from the American public. The lack of a solution to the Palestinian issue, continued unrest on the West Bank, and frequent broadcasts showing a map of Israel in one color and "occupied territories" in another color, would certainly be factors. Only by being aware of the nature of television and being sensitive to its qualities can changes in public opinion or "political climate" be understood. Since these changes surface only over a period of time, the causes often seem obscure, but it is very likely that one of the causes is the subtle way in which the public's sense of reality is modified — if not created.

IV. *Judaism and the New Media*

Even if television had not been invented, the establishment of the State of Israel would be the most important recent event for world Jewry, but the development of the state and its relationship to Jews in other countries would have been different. The existence of television and other new forms of communication can similarly be expected to modify other facets of contemporary Jewish culture. One need only consider some basic aspects of Judaism and examine how media influence these facets and their arrangement into a whole.

The major components of the religion are concept of a god and allegiance to it, obedience to a code of conduct, and a national identity. The tension among the components, their relative importance, and the

12. Frank Mankiewicz and Joel Swerdlow, *Remote Control: Television and the Manipulation of American Life* (New York: Times Books, 1978), p. 74.

balance to be achieved among them is an ancient source of debate, and many movements in Judaism, for example, differ from one another depending in large part on which of these aspects is stressed. Writing and print are media which could communicate effectively all of these ideas. They encouraged the monotheistic idea, provided a structure for a legal code, communicated ethical principles, preserved the unity of a people over large distances even when there was little ongoing communication, and maintained the idea of a future homeland. The establishment of a state and the concomitant development of television will alter the balance among these aspects of the religion. Since television is highly biased in terms of spatial concerns, it focuses on the present rather than the past, excels at communicating material concerns, but is poor in communicating the spiritual, the abstract, and the religious. Nationalistic ideas are fostered while religious and legalistic components are weakened.

The effect of television on the religious and nationalistic consciousness of a people can be illustrated most concretely by contrasting how attitudes toward a homeland were formed in the past with how they are now acquired. For the traditional Jew, the idea of a homeland was maintained through reference in his prayers several times a day and he prayed facing towards Jerusalem. For the Jew who desired assimilation and who could escape the local community, the idea of Israel, together with other aspects of the religion, lost significance. The modern Jew, contrary to popular opinion, may find total assimilation more difficult. The ritual of watching the nightly news has replaced the evening prayer ritual and brings to contemporary non-observant Jews as frequent a reminder of Israel as did the prayer service for previous generations. The difference in context and media, however, is critically important and explains many changes occurring in modern Jewry. Israel, for the traditional Jew, was incorporated into the religion through prayer. Israel, when communicated through the new media, is separated from other aspects of the religion and becomes important in itself. Awareness of Israel increases, but the homeland's connection to a religious core and ancient civilization gradually becomes diminished. Religious and national concerns are no longer connected. Indeed, work or donations on behalf of Israel are often substitutes for more traditional religious involvement.

This analysis suggests the outlines of a future internal struggle for Judaism. The power of television — secular, rooted in the present, fostering a common identity over vast distances, fulfilling some of the needs of a modern state and promoting nationalistic concerns — will be in a tension with the influence of the old media that are more traditional, past-oriented, communicating a broader spectrum of ideas, and encouraging other elements of the religion. To resolve these tensions effectively will require new understanding of the message embodied in the Second Commandment concerning the particular powers of a visual medium and will occur only if there is more awareness of the influence of media on

society which, so far, has been ignored by analysts of Jewish culture and thought. Television, computers, photography, film and the telephone may seem irrelevant to an ancient religion which uses Torah scrolls that must be handwritten in accordance with ancient laws. The use of any communications medium, however, is neither innocuous nor inconsequential. As McLuhan once noted, "once a new technology comes into a social milieu it cannot cease to permeate that milieu until every institution is saturated."¹³

13. McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, p. 161.

Shiva

ELLEN FRANKEL

The family fills the musty room
 Like a long-trapped sigh.
 In the kitchen, seated at the small white table,
 Her children ring the simple candle,
 As pearls once ringed her sturdy neck.
 They speak her words,
 High, guttural and pleading,
 Shouting like Cossacks.

In the next room, their children sit,
 Foreigners in their own land.

ELLEN FRANKEL is a free-lance writer.

Jews, Cults and Apostates

ALLEN S. MALLER

THERE HAS BEEN MUCH CONCERN IN THE Jewish community about the "inroads" that cults are making in leading Jewish youth astray. While the emotionality of the discussion is understandable in view of Jewish history in the past, in order to do more than simply cry about the situation it is necessary to know what is really happening. This article will take a look at the big picture rather than focus on the experience of a few individuals or on one or two cults.

In 1978, Gordon Melton published a two volume *Encyclopedia of American Religions*, an exhaustive work listing everything in America that could be remotely considered a religious sect or cult. An analysis of the work, done by three sociologists, led them to list 501 groups that they considered to be cults.¹ As one might expect, there are more cults in California (167) than anywhere else. New York is in second place (59) and Illinois is in third (34). Since more than half of the Jewish population lives in these three states one can readily see why Jews are more highly "at risk" than is the average American. However, when one adjusts the number of cults by the size of the population in each state the results are somewhat different. California ranks third (after Nevada and New Mexico) and New York ranks eighth (trailing Colorado, Arizona and Oregon).

Different types of cults are located in different areas of the country. Communes, for example, are more numerous in New Mexico and Oregon. Asian religions (cults, not normative denominations) are more likely to be found in New York and California, where there are large settlements of non-Christian foreigners. Flying Saucer cults are heavily concentrated in Oregon. The prevalence of Jewish apostates in such groups as the "Moonies" and the "Hari Krishnas" is partly due to the locations where they are active as well as the recruitment methods that they use. Other cults in other areas of the country have few, if any, Jews within them.

Religious cults have been part of the American religious scene throughout most of our history. Theosophical and Spiritualist groups were major elements in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and they make up approximately 25% of all the cults in the United States today. Flying Saucer cults (4%), on the other hand, are obviously very new, but almost all of the others were founded in the 50s and 60s. The Asian faith cults (10%) which were around in the period following the First World War reached their greatest expansion in the 60s. In that decade 40 such cults were founded, while in the 70s the number of new ones was only 30.

1. Stark, Bainbridge and Doyle, "Cults of America," *Sociological Analysis* 40, (Nov. 1979).

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The "Jesus People" cults grew to prominence in the 60s (5 founded) and continued to expand into the 70s (7 founded).

It is important for us to view cults from a historical perspective. America is a very religious country. The absence of an official, legally-sponsored religion has traditionally allowed individuals and small groups to go their own way. In the 19th century there were dozens of communes, most of them religious, the majority of which fell apart within a few years. In the same way, many of the cults that were formed over the last century have not survived. Others have been transformed in different directions, while only a few (like the Mormons or Christian Science) have become establishment religious organizations.

From the Jewish point of view, it is not important whether we lose people to solidly established religious groups or to transitory and marginal groups. Nor should it be important whether the Jewish apostates are part of a middle class, as opposed to an extremist fringe group. Many Jewish parents seem to be more upset when a child drops out of college to enter a cult than they would be if the same child were to get married in a Christian church and agree to raise any children as Christians.

Let us call a spade a spade. A Jew who deserts Judaism and is devoted to another religion is an apostate. He may repent and return to the fold, but until, and unless, he does so, he remains an apostate. Jews who are baptized or allow their children to be baptised are apostates. Having made my position clear, I would like to look at several different religious groups in order to determine their impact on the Jewish community.

I will purposely mix youth cults with middle class groups, and highly publicized groups with unknowns. I take my examples from California groups, most of which I have had direct contact with:

1. *The People's Temple*: Of the almost 1,000 people who died in Guyana, less than 1% were Jewish. One was a family from Los Angeles. The mother had been involved in Yoga and seances and then in faith healing. She had drawn her husband and two children into the cult and had convinced them to sell their house and go with Jim Jones. There was also a single Jewish man who had been involved in radical politics and civil rights causes. People's Temple was an inter-racial community (mostly blacks) which should have attracted more Jews, but its overt emphasis on Christianity probably accounts for the few who were involved.

2. *Ethical Culture*: There were three Congregations in the 1960s (in Pasadena, West L.A., and the San Fernando Valley) but, by the early 70s, they had all merged to concentrate in the Valley. Only 25-30 adults attend the Sunday lectures and the school has about 15-18 children. This same decline is occurring nationwide. In the Valley, about half the members of Ethical Culture are of Jewish origin (some, but not most, married to non-Jews). While the Jewish apostasy rate is high for this group (30-50%), the numbers are low (a few dozen).

3. *Iskon (Hari Krishna)*: Founded in 1965 by a Swami in New York, there

are currently 50-60 Ashrams in the U.S., with 5 to 10,000 members. Robert Gurt, spokesman for the L.A. Temple, (which is the center of the group's publishing activities) claimed about 1,000 members in the L.A. area in November of 1977. A veteran of thirteen years in the movement told me that there were about 500 devotees who had taken vows, plus 300 or so who are affiliated but not yet committed. Of those who had taken vows, about 10% have already left the group. According to my informant, about 10-15% of the members are Jewish. He, himself, is from a mixed marriage and had no Jewish education. There are others like him in the group and it is not clear why they should be considered "Jewish" apostates. About 30-35% of the leaders are Jewish and this may account for the higher estimates given by other observers. Rabbi Richard Israel estimates that half of Iskon in Boston is Jewish, but that would be only 35 out of 70 people. A study of Iskon members found that 15% were Jewish, as compared to 18% Roman Catholics, 7% Presbyterians and 5% Episcopalians. 25% said that their parents had no religion. While the Jewish percentage is high, the percentage for Presbyterians and Episcopalians is also well above their proportion in the population. They, like the Jews, are predominantly a middle class, college-educated group. Any cult which appeals to the youth of such families would normally be about 10-20% Jewish, depending upon its geographical center of activity. The Jewish apostasy rate for Iskon is not disproportionately high, but since the group is fairly large there are probably 1-2,000 Jewish apostates nationwide in it.

4. *Bahai*: About 1100 members are affiliated in Southern California. Although their regional headquarters is located in a heavily Jewish area, next door to a Synagogue, they appear to have a small number of Jewish apostates. They conduct "fireside meetings" at over 30 locations throughout the county (in people's homes). There are fewer than 20 children in their school. Of the 29 names listed as hosts for the fireside services, three or four sounded Jewish. A clerical worker estimated that the Jewish percentage in Bahai is less than 5%, but it may be as high as 10% among the leaders. Bahai, therefore, is neither high in the percentage of Jewish apostates (5-10%) nor in the number of actual apostates (50-100).

5. *Jews for Jesus*: This is the most flamboyant and publicized of a half dozen Christian missions to the Jews. It was founded in San Francisco in the early 70s by Moishe Rosen, an ordained Baptist minister who had previously worked for many years for the American Board of Missions to the Jews. In 1980, Jews for Jesus had an annual budget of over two and a half million dollars, and 65 full-time professional staff. The Jews for Jesus branch in Los Angeles, however, is limited to a few dozen people. Beth Sar Shalom, the Hebrew/Christian mission of the American Board of Missions to the Jews (the oldest of the groups) has a Los Angeles branch that operates out of a storefront in a Jewish neighborhood in the San Fernando Valley. It has between 75 and 150 people involved in its services, Bible study groups and activities. A "Synagogue" called Ahavat Zion is a

front for a mission supported by the Assemblies of God Church, a Fundamentalist group, largely from the South. It claims 75 members. There are several other church groups and evangelistic organizations in the Los Angeles area that have Jewish departments and, from time to time, practice Jewish evangelism. The total number of people involved in all these groups is probably between 300 and 500.

However, about one third of the people involved in these groups never were Jewish. Hans Vanderwoff, a leader of a "Messianic Synagogue," in Toronto, claims that 60% of his congregation are ex-Jews.² The wife of the minister of Temple Aron Kodesh told me that 70% of the congregation is Jewish.³ A study of 27 deeply involved members of Reverend Rosen's group in San Francisco reported that 15 were Jewish, 8 were Christian, and 4 were from mixed families.⁴ Generally, 30-40% of the people involved in Hebrew/Christianity are gentiles or from mixed marriages. Indeed, several of the ministers are children of mixed marriage: Mike Evans, leader of B'nai Yeshua (Long Island), Jack Hickman, of Beth Yehoshua (New York), and Sammy Oppenheim of Ben David Fellowship (Texas) are examples. Others are married to Christians, usually Fundamentalist Protestants.

All of these groups exaggerate their successes in order to justify their budgets. The President of the American Board of Missions to the Jews was honest enough to admit that last year his group saved only 137 Jews.⁵ At that rate, each Jew cost \$5-10,000.

6. *The Integral Yoga Institute*: Founded by Guru Dev, the Institute has an Ashram in West Los Angeles, in a Jewish area, and a monastery in Santa Barbara. Of the 14 Swamis (monks and nuns) in the monastery, 4 were Jewish — 3 males and 1 female. All of the four had started practicing Yoga, had then become interested in Hatha Yoga and finally had become devotees. The apostasy rate is high (20-30%) but the numbers involved are low (a few dozen).

7. *The Catholic Church of God*: This is a church which claims to follow both the new and the old Testaments and stresses observance of the Sabbath on Saturday. Attendance at Saturday services (circa 60) is about the same as on Sunday. The minister is the son of a mixed marriage who was raised as a Christian. He says that about 10% of the church members were Jewish. There are seven similar churches in New York. This is an honest heretical group and is not to be confused with the fraudulent "Messianic Synagogues" sponsored by the Assemblies of God Church or the Hebrew Christian Missionary Alliance.

8. *Religious Science, Science of Mind, etc.*: There are a large number of

2. *Christianity Today*, (February 28, 1980).

3. This is an Assemblies of God "Synagogue" near Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

4. Juliene Lipson, *Jews for Jesus: An Anthropological Study*, (1978 Phd. thesis at U.C. San Francisco).

5. Reverend Harold Sevens, *The Chosen People*, 96, 2 (October, 1980).

metaphysical-spiritualist-religious science churches in the Los Angeles area. Rabbi Bill Kramer, who has had contact with many of these churches over a long period, estimates that there are thousands of Jews, mostly single women in their 30s to 60s, who are involved with these churches. The percentage of Jews varies from under 10% for churches located in non-Jewish areas to 12-25% for the Valley congregations and over 30% for the Beverly Hills/West L.A. churches. Most of the women involved have recently suffered psychic trauma, e.g., death of a spouse, divorce or mental breakdown. Often they leave the church after a few years when their lives have stabilized. They rarely cut themselves off from Jewish celebrations or events and are usually buried as Jews.

In the 1920s, there was a noticeable involvement of Jews with Christian Science. Indeed, a New York Rabbi, Morris Lichtenstein, and his wife, Tehillah, found a Synagogue which stresses a Jewish Science of Mind approach in order to bring these people back to Judaism. There is little Jewish involvement today with Christian Science, which is a declining movement (it has suffered losses of 20-40% in the last two decades in both number of members, and practitioners).

The non-Christian, Religious Science-Unity-New Thought, etc. groups in Jewish neighborhoods do have extensive participation by Jews, while the most extreme groups, which use astrology, dianetics and ascended masters have few Jewish members. The Morningland Church of the Ascended Christ has more than 1,000 members, fewer than two dozen of whom are Jews. In the early 70s the Church of Religious Science of Beverly Hills had a similar membership, of whom several hundred were Jewish. Now, membership is down about 50% but the Jewish percentage remains 30-40%.

In some ways, Transcendental Meditation is, for people in their teens through their 30s, what the various Science of Mind groups are for those in the 40s to 60s. Most of the Jews in it are not sufficiently involved to be considered apostates but are only somewhat estranged from Jewish tradition and the Jewish community. Those who are heavily involved are alienated, and could, philosophically, be considered heretics. Nevertheless, especially since most people are involved for only a few years, these groups do not present the threat that Christians, Hindus and Buddhists do.

A few generalizations are now in order. Proportionately, the most cults are found in the western states, where the level of church and synagogue affiliation is the lowest in the country. The fewest cults are to be found in the south, where affiliation and traditional religion are strongest. This would indicate that the absence of traditional, conservative religious organizations provides an opening, and, indeed, may even stimulate the growth of cults. Since Jews, especially those with good general educations and poor Jewish ones, are highly secular, we must expect that they will continue to be involved in cults.

Many of the people in cults are the children of mixed marriages. This is true especially for the so called Messianic Jews (B'nai Yeshuah, Jews for Jesus, Hebrew Christians, etc.). Since the mixed marriage rate rose significantly in the late 60s and 70s, children of these marriages will probably be attracted to cults in increasing numbers because they lack a clear and secure Jewish identity.

Overlooked in all the excitement about Jewish apostasy is the steady number of non-Jews who convert to Judaism. With no real effort on our part, indeed, often overcoming discouragement, several thousand non-Jews become Jewish every year. In general, these people are more emotionally secure, academically successful, and spiritually competent than are the Jewish apostates. As one scholar has said, "Our imports are much superior to our exports." While this is of little comfort to a family that has lost a member to a cult, or even to a mainline denomination, those who are concerned with Jewish survival would do much better to concentrate on improving the reception that the community extends to those who choose to be Jewish.

A recent study⁶ of five national surveys (1973-77) indicated that for every million Jews born Jewish, 24,000 had become apostates. This means that we have lost over 125,000 Jews to other religions (25% to Catholicism, 50% to Protestant denominations, and 25% to sects and cults.) On the other hand, of every one million Jews who currently identify themselves as Jews, 21,000 were not born Jewish. Thus, we have gained over 110,000 converts. Most people are surprised to learn that this number approximates the number of apostates. We seem to pay so much more attention to our losses than our gains. Our real losses are to assimilation, secularism, etc.; for every Jewish apostate there are four or five who just drop out into the "none" category.

We could more than offset our losses, whatever their cause, by an outreach program to the many thousands of people who have outgrown their childhood beliefs and seek a more mature religion which supports their desire for independence and freedom of inquiry. Often, we cannot compete with cults in terms of security and warmth, but we do offer a tradition and a community which encourages spiritual maturity and intellectual growth, as well as a rootedness in a past tradition, and a role to play in a Messianic unfolding. What is really necessary is to stop crying and berating ourselves because we cannot be all things to all people. We should concentrate on doing well what we can do, and on doing what would appeal to many presently outside the Jewish community who would gladly enter if they were invited to do so.

6. *Journal for The Scientific Study of Religion* (March, 1980).

Conversion to Judaism: An Analysis of Family Matters

STEVEN HUBERMAN

THE POSTMARITAL EFFECTS OF INTERFAITH marriage are hotly debated but little understood from a scientific standpoint. Many persons, particularly members of the clergy, assert that intermarriages are accompanied by an inordinately high amount of maladjustment and unhappiness, partially because they supposedly face family discord rather than harmony. The couple, isolated from family social support, cannot achieve interpersonal adjustment and are likely to dissolve their relationship. In this paper, we shall examine these supposed consequences of intermarriage with respect to one particular population segment — born Jews married to converts to Judaism. Their marital union will be referred to as a conversionary marriage.¹

Research Population

The data to be utilized in analyzing the postmarital effects of conversionary marriage are drawn primarily from the Intermarriage and Conversion Project sponsored by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and directed by the author. Our study population consisted of converts to Reform Judaism in Greater Boston, the overwhelming majority of them being, or having been married, to born Jews. The major source of data for the study was a questionnaire returned by 85% of the participants in the project; a total of 181 respondents.

Findings in this article are based on four other data sources. 1 — Some respondents to the questionnaire were randomly selected for further in-depth, qualitative interviewing. 2 — Archival records were reviewed for 389 graduates of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations Introduction to Judaism (Conversion) Program. 3 — The author served as a non-participant observer in one such conversion course and in

1. There is disagreement among writers on this topic as to the definition of "intermarriage." In this article, "intermarriage" refers to a marriage between a Jew and someone who is by birth a non-Jew. A Jew married to a born Catholic is, thus, intermarried. There are two types of intermarriage — mixed marriage and conversionary marriage. We shall use the term "mixed marriage" to describe a marriage in which the non-Jew does *not* convert to Judaism. "Conversionary marriage" describes a marriage in which the Gentile does convert to Judaism. The primary focus of this study is conversionary marriage.

an experiential program for potential converts and their fiancés (fiancées) or spouses. 4 — Many rabbis in Greater Boston were questioned about their experiences with intermarrieds and converts. Information gathered from all of these sources enabled us to study the divorce proneness, marital harmony, fertility patterns, child-parent relations, and in-law troubles of the respondents.

Divorce Proneness and Marital Adjustment

Empirical research has shown that there is a correlation between the religious affiliation of marital partners and the rate of family disorganization through annulment, separation, or desertion. Dr. William Goode, a specialist on the family, reports that intermarriages are more prone to divorce than marriages in which the partners are of the same faith² because the former have a greater potential for tension and incompatibility. Marital relations are, at best, fragile and by introducing another source of possible discord — divergent religious backgrounds — the marriage is far less likely to succeed.

Most of the allegations about the instability of intermarriages are based on the premise that both partners are strong in their own religious identifications. However, in a union of two individuals who are not strong in their respective faiths, there may not be as much potential for conflict over religious issues. Religion may be so irrelevant to their lives that it may not even be a source of contention. It should be pointed out, however, that even marginally religious partners may encounter tensions from another source — their families. A couple generally does not live in a vacuum and the ideas and values of their respective families may come into conflict. The couple's Jewish and Gentile parents may disagree, for example, about whether a grandchild should be baptized or undergo a *brit milah* (ritual circumcision), celebrate Christmas or *Chanukah*, have a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* or be confirmed, and so on. Intermarried persons, having to deal with such inter-family disagreements, need a good deal of fortitude and

2. William J. Goode, "Dissolution of Family Role Systems," *The Family* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1964), pp. 91–102. For additional information on the relation between marital dissolution and religious affiliation see Milton Barron, "Intergroup Aspects of Choosing a Mate"; Milton Barron, "An Appraisal of Research until Midcentury"; John H. Burma, "Interethnic Marriage in Los Angeles"; Clark Vincent, "Interfaith Marriages: Problem or Symptom?"; Harold Christensen and Kenneth Barber, "Interfaith versus Intrafaith Marriages in Indiana"; and Erich Rosenthal, "Jewish Intermarriage in Indiana," in *The Blending American: Patterns of Intermarriage*, ed. by Milton Barron (Chicago: Quadrangle, 1972), pp. 45, 48, 106, 109, 145, 192–193, 214–215, and 238. In addition, we should note that Louis Berman, *Jews and Intermarriage: A Study in Personality and Culture* (New York: Yoseloff, 1968), attributes the divorce proneness of intermarrieds to their flouting the rules of society. Just as they have ignored society's disfavor of intermarriage, they flout social opposition to divorce. In contemporary America, where many families are accepting of intermarriage and divorce is more commonplace, Berman's argument is no longer persuasive. See pp. 178–179, 524.

determination to make their marriages succeed.³ With this background in mind, we examine the specific data on our respondents. Does our study population undergo the tensions “inherent” in an intermarital situation and does this discord hinder their integration into the Jewish group?

Although we conducted an intensive effort to locate all of the converts to Reform Judaism in the Boston Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area, we were not able to locate a significant number of divorced converts. The modal marriage length is five or more years, our respondents are almost all married for the first time and, most importantly, 90% of them are presently married to the same spouse to whom they were engaged or married at the time of their conversion. Based on these data, our study population is not divorce prone. Two explanations can be offered. Divorced converts may have escaped our investigative search or conversion solidifies marital bonds. Although we can only speculate on whether divorce people eluded our investigation, we do have data to show that conversion is likely to draw together the parties to the marriage, rather than apart.⁴

The relations between husbands and wives in this study seem stable. To measure the marital adjustment of our respondents we asked them to rate the happiness of their marriages. Ninety-five percent report that they are “very happy” or “pretty happy” in their marriage. Only 5% report a low level of marital contentment. We also raised the question, “Do you feel that converting to Judaism has helped your marriage or (in the case of divorced converts) your previous marriage?” Eight out of ten respondents said, “yes, definitely,” “to a large extent,” or “to some extent.” Only two out of each ten respondents feel that converting has not helped their marriage or has caused problems. It is interesting that conversion was of as much help in bolstering marriages among the divorced as among the non-divorced converts. In general, divorced converts indicate that their family disorganization was not due to their dissimilar religious backgrounds, but to other disagreements and difficulties. Although there are a variety of precipitating factors in the divorces in this study, religious incompatibility does not seem to be a primary one. In fact, a number of divorced respondents indicated that converting to Judaism helped solidify their marriages. One divorced respondent explained it this way:

Converting to Judaism brought us closer together in that I understood him, his upbringing, and his life style better. It brought me closer to his family

3. Albert Gordon, *Intermarriage: Interfaith, Interracial, Interethnic* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), pp. 87–118, 348–373.

4. A critical question in social science research is the representativeness of the study population. Although our respondents converted almost exclusively under Reform auspices, we believe that our observations on family matters would pertain to Conservative and Orthodox converts. Until similar studies are undertaken with these other groups, our findings should be viewed as reasonably reliable but not definitive. The significance of our research is that the majority of converts currently enter Judaism through the Reform movement.

and they become more accepting of me. I feel they even loved me more. Converting really laid the groundwork for building a family.

When we focus on the intact marriages in this study, we find that converting is one factor, among many, drawing a husband and wife together. Many respondents tell how conversion has added unity to their marriage: "It has united our marriage, helped us to grow in understanding of each other's religion. It's one more shared area in our lives." Others reinforce the view that a uniformity of religion furthers the husband-wife ties. "Because my husband is very Jewish, my embracing his faith and culture created a very strong bond. It is an important bonding between us." Other respondents add that a unified marriage requires common religious beliefs: "In marriage one should feel a unity. This cannot be if both spouses have totally opposing beliefs. . . . My converting gives my wife and I [sic] a common bond, something that is always there."

Some converts specifically state that sharing in Jewish religious activity adds cohesion to marriage. One woman, whose parents were intermarried and whose mother converted to Catholicism but who did not follow the practices of her new faith, reports how she wants her household to be more unified:

My mother was Lutheran but converted to Catholicism when she married my father. She brought me up Catholic, but never went to church with us. I always felt we were not a unified family because of this. In Judaism, much of the religious tone is set in the home by the woman. It is important to share this religious aspect of marriage.

An observant convert emphasizes much the same idea:

We observe Jewish holidays together and it helps to draw us closer at those times. It also helps to give each other a better understanding of each other's family life and religion.

Others feel that one of the factors influencing the success of marriage is harmonious companionship based on common interests. The following comments of a female respondent reflect this feeling that common Jewish interests and activities are important to marital success:

Converting has helped our marriage. Many of the ideals we share, activities we attend, books we read, and issues we're interested in revolve around Judaism.

In sum, the remarks of our respondents indicate that a common religious base can help centralize the individual members of the family.⁵

The Childless Intermarriage

Although traditional Judaism esteems parents who have many children, the fertility rate of American Jewish families is low. Jews, the most

5. How Jewish identity can strengthen the Jewish family is explored in Norman Lamm, "Family Values and Family Breakdown: Analysis and Prescription," in *Jewish Consciousness Raising* (New York: Board of Jewish Education, 1973).

extensive and efficient users of contraceptives in this country, are having small families. Many Jewish parents do not want to have their personal aspirations blocked by offspring. They also advance the argument that, with fewer children, each one can be given a maximum amount of love, attention, and advantage. As a result, the projected family size among Jews who are having children is between 1.5 and 1.7 children.⁶

A number of social scientists have argued that intermarriages produce even fewer children than do marriages among born Jews. By having none at all, intermarried parents need not confront the problem of how to raise them — Jewish, Gentile, or marginal, — and, thus, obviate identity conflicts. In discussing the problems of the intermarried, Dr. Louis Berman, an academic psychologist, tells of a Jewish woman of a high socio-economic status who married a non-Jewish attorney once she had promised “her heartbroken mother that they never would have any children.”⁷ Berman cites comments of other individuals who believe that their intermarriages are not well adapted to raising children and who remain, therefore, childless. The point that Berman makes is that a percentage of intermarrieds are disappointed in their marital choice, insecure in their religious identity, and unwilling to pass on a social handicap to their offspring. Such couples opt to remain childless.

The reasons behind the childless intermarriage are perhaps best summarized by Albert Memmi, French author and sociologist, in *The Liberation of the Jews*. Based on his own intermarriage, he comments:

And then there are the children. . . . The children bring to light the problems inherent in the [intermarital] situation and make the parents more aware of the importance of their acts, for they demand immediate and decisive choices which are pregnant with serious consequences . . . Should the boy be circumcized? According to religious law, there are only eight days to decide after which the boy will remain uncircumcized. Should the girl be baptized? It must be done within a year or it will never be done. What upbringing should they be given? A religious upbringing or not? . . . Why push them in one direction rather than another? . . . So what do you do? Do you do nothing, so that the child is drawn to neither side? . . . But let's not pull the wool over our eyes: in this case to do nothing is a decision with the probable consequence that the children will become part of the majority.⁸

Rather than grapple with these troubling questions, it is far simpler not to have any children.

Survey data does tend to support the view that mixed-married couples are less fertile than Jews who in-marry. Goldstein and Goldscheider, for example, in their study of Greater Providence, found that the instability and poor adjustment in mixed marriages resulted in

6. Family formation data and patterns are reviewed in George Johnson, ed., “Zero Population Growth and the Jewish Community: A Symposium,” *Analysis* No. 60 (Washington, DC: Institute for Jewish Policy, November-December, 1976).

7. Berman, p. 231. The fertility patterns of the intermarried are referred to on pp. 179, 230–232, 554.

8. Albert Memmi, *The Liberation of the Jew* (New York: Viking, 1973), pp. 101–106.

such couples having a high amount of childlessness.⁹ But though this low fertility pattern may hold for marriages in which the non-Jew does not convert to Judaism, our data does not show any significant differential between marriages involving a conversion versus in-marriages. Our respondents have a mean of 1.2 children, while born Jews also have only between 1.5 and 1.7 children. Moreover, this slight differential disappears when we control for age. The typical respondent in our study is twenty-nine years old and has approximately the same fertility rate as born Jews in the same bracket.¹⁰ These data suggest that intermarriage involving a conversion does not have an effect on the fertility rate.

Conversion and Parental Reaction

Although intermarried converts do not differ much from born Jews with respect to divorce proneness or fertility, they have a much more problematic set of kinship relationships. The parents and family of the convert cannot be expected to be pleased or even accepting of the conversion of their child to Judaism. In fact, some converts are so fearful of their parents' reaction that they delay informing them as long as possible. One candidate for conversion, whose family is by no means fond of Jews, remarked: "My parents are anti-Semitic. I wouldn't want to be in the same room as my parents when they learn I'm converting."

In general, parents resent, and are opposed to, the decision to convert. Even those who are not churchgoers or religious tend to regard conversion as treason, a denial of the values of the religion to which they belong. As a result, most parents feel a sense of failure, loss, or remorse; they are upset and hurt. This convert describes her mother's reaction along the lines we have suggested:

My mother was hurt because she felt I was rejecting her — even though she is not an active member of the Church. At one point, she told my husband, "She's not a good Christian so why do you think she'll be a better Jew."

Another convert tells of the same type of reaction by her father: "My father was confused, felt rejected, angry, and afraid. He knew nothing about Judaism." One woman's conversion to Judaism and her marriage in a Jewish ceremony resulted in a parental reaction noted by many: "My mother thinks that getting married in a Jewish ceremony means that I'm rejecting part of my upbringing." Conversion is a traitorous act; it repudiates the value system of the convert's parents.

On the other hand, many converts express the view that their parents have no choice but to accept their decision. They indicate that their parents' love for them overrides their concern with religious affiliation.

9. Sidney Goldstein and Calvin Goldscheider, *Jewish Americans* (Englewood: Prentice-Hall, 1968), pp. 166ff.

10. Comparison data on non-intermarried Jews are contained in Floyd Fowler, *A Study of the Jewish Population of Greater Boston* (Boston: Combined Jewish Philanthropies, 1976).

Some parents, like the following, go so far as to endorse the decision to convert if it furthers the child's happiness: "They felt I should do what makes *me* happy. And they happened to like my girlfriend very much." This point of view is articulated by a conversion candidate:

My parents were happy when they knew the decision was what I wanted. My mother had to accept the decision. If they love you, they must accept the decision. My parents are happy because they know I will be happy.

Yet another respondent states his parents' reaction to conversion:

They were upset. I would imagine they were as upset as my wife's parents would have been if she became a Catholic. But they love us and didn't want to interfere with our wishes.

Although some parents never fully comprehend why their child abandons his [or her] faith, a minority of parents do understand the factors which prompt the abandonment. An articulate graduate of the Catholic University made the point thus: "My parents were saddened but resigned to the fact that this was my own decision and they understood my reason fully."

Some parents are not overly antagonistic toward the conversion candidate since they believe that Judaism is better than atheism. They are fearful that their child, who has rejected a childhood faith, will completely abandon religion and have no ethical moorings. That view is apparent in the following comment:

My mother was hurt in that I did not accept her Catholicism after so many years in that religion. However, she was happy I did find *a* religion since she felt I was heading towards atheism.

The very same idea is expressed by a conversion candidate who had attended Catholic parochial school for eight years: "My father said it didn't matter to what faith I committed myself as long as I believed and followed that faith honestly."

Although a minority of parents do accept a child's conversion with equanimity, the overwhelming majority express clear and unequivocal resentment and opposition, and indicate that converting to Judaism is folly and that the idea should be jettisoned. The majority of respondents ignored this parental admonition, but were very much affected by their parents' feelings. We found that persons who came from unhappy or broken homes were most prone to ignore parental advice and to move forward with conversion. In their estimation, conversion, when undertaken in connection with marriage to a Jew, would result in a religiously unified home and might lessen the chance that the marriage would be unhappy. The parents of such persons, having lived through an unhappy or dissolved marriage themselves, are, in the main, not inclined to block the wish of a child to become a Jew if it will make him [or her] happy. However, in the overwhelming number of cases there is a substantial amount of tension between the convert and the parents. We should point

out that, although some individuals may want, subconsciously, to hurt or offend their parents, most persons do not convert to antagonize them. Such antagonism is a by-product of the conversion decision.

Given the resentment and opposition of parents, it is no surprise that they do not attend the conversion ceremony — the solemnization of the decision to convert. Only 27% of converts invite their parents to that ceremony and, of those who were invited, only a handful actually did attend. In our judgment, it is prudent that the parents not be present at these ceremonies, which are frequently traumatic. It can be difficult to hear one's offspring make a declaration renouncing Christianity, embracing Judaism, and, in many cases, pledging to raise the children as Jews.

The negativism that parents may feel about their child converting does not readily dissipate. Almost eight out of ten parents do not experience a change in their hostile feeling after the conversion takes place. However, as time passes, the anger, hurt, or resentment gradually begins to ease and it is the rare convert who has been completely disowned by his parents. The report of the following respondent is *not* representative:

After my conversion the feeling of my parents being threatened intensified. After my father learned my wife and I also wanted to hyphenate our names, the intensification became so great he has not spoken to me since.

The typical parent accepts the conversion and intermarriage, retains ties with the child, and seeks to establish a tolerable relationship with the Jewish spouse. The following quotations corroborate this fact: "Mary's parents were at first angry, but the bad feelings went away." "My parents little by little accepted the decision. They are glad I'm not going to be an atheist. At first, my father wouldn't speak to me." "My parents didn't talk to us for a month. Now they are very accepting. They send us Jewish articles."

When we examine the overall data, we see that most parents ultimately do become reconciled with their children. Our converts report that their current relationship with their parents is approximately comparable to what it was when they were growing up. About 70% had formerly been "very close" or "moderately close" with their parents and today continue that way. Similarly, the percentage of converts who are "not at all close" (7 to 8%) has remained constant over time. We attribute these ultimate reconciliations to two factors. First, most parents eventually recognize that their grown child is an independent person who must be allowed to make decisions and, perhaps, errors. If that child's marriage proves successful, parental resistance is followed by acquiescence. A parochial school graduate tells us: "My mother has accepted my conversion. My father's feelings are changed as he sees that my marriage is solid and happy and that I don't regret my decision." Second, as many parents of converts learn more about Judaism, their acceptance and silent suffering become easier. The comment of a person who converted eighteen years ago is instructive in this connection.

As my father came to know more about Judaism (attending his grandsons' *Bar Mitzvahs*, etc.) he came to appreciate it, and to realize it was right for me.

Those converts who have the best relationship with their parents follow the example of this respondent:

My husband and I have included my parents in our Passover Seder and lighting of Sabbath candles. They seem to feel more comfortable with this familiarity. . . . We have made a concerted effort to make my parents more comfortable about Judaism and also teach them about it.

In-Law Troubles

An unwelcome concomitant of many marriages is in-law troubles. Dr. Albert Gordon, in his book, *Intermarriage: Interfaith, Interracial, Interethnic*, maintains that intermarriages, even among Christians, are especially susceptible to such troubles, and cites a variety of survey research and clinical sources as examples. One concerns a couple, Mary, a Protestant, and her husband, John, a Roman Catholic. Mary's father, a university professor and a minimal Protestant said:

When my daughter (Mary) . . . married John, a Catholic . . . , we did have our worries about it because we knew that John's family was very close to the Catholic Church. . . . John's parents, particularly his mother, were very unhappy because neither John nor Mary attended the Catholic Church. . . . John has permitted his children to be reared as Protestants, and he wants to be so regarded himself. John's mother is really quite hurt about what has happened to her (and our) grandchildren. I suspect that when she sees John she keeps on reminding him of his "duty." . . .

I can understand how unhappy John's parents are because John, Mary, and the children are not Roman Catholics and that makes us, too, unhappy for them. I suspect that John and Mary will never turn back to the Catholic Church. They are strong and good people.

Even in intermarriages such as this where all the persons involved are good people, I'm afraid that someone must get hurt. In this case the direct victims are John's parents. Indirectly, John and the children may suffer.¹¹

In such situations, the daughter-in-law is blamed for the parent-son estrangement and she becomes a scapegoat, carrying the brunt of the in-laws' resentment and anger.

The situation of John and Mary and of couples like them is lamentable from both psychological and pragmatic points of view. Young couples frequently rely on parental financial support during sickness, childbirth, and the purchase of major items such as an automobile or home. Those who are subject to in-law animosity when they need help often react negatively: the convert comes to resent the in-laws, feels jealousy towards more favored siblings, and cynicism towards the Jewish group. The respondents in our study who had hostile in-laws and/or parents usually

11. Gordon, *Intermarriage*, pp. 99–101. For a good description of the problems of the intermarried, such as in-law difficulties, see Berman, pp. 176–235.

reacted by moving away from them. To avoid conflicts and irritations, converts and their spouses stayed away from their kin and avoided all family contacts.

Although a number of converts in this study have the kind of troubled relations described in the case of John and Mary, these family crises tend to be short-lived. Only 6% of our respondents are "not at all close" with their in-laws while 72% are "moderately close" or "very close." The majority of converts (77%) have been completely accepted by their spouse's family as a Jew. Nineteen percent are partially accepted and only 4% are not. Although a number of converts indicated that their in-laws were originally suspect of them, virtually all of them are now accepted. As one respondent in another study reflects:

When I overheard my mother-in-law speak of me to a friend as "my Ruth" then I knew that I was really accepted.¹²

Many converts state that they not only have a friendly relationship with their in-laws, but that their in-laws take a special pride in them. Such positive reactions by in-laws are ruefully acknowledged by Rabbi David Kirshenbaum in a polemic against intermarriage and conversion:

When before have Jews taken pride in non-Jewish ancestry or family relationship . . . even when the convert in truth followed Judaism? Among certain Jewish parents, a proselyte daughter-in-law who can make tasty *gefилte* fish for the Sabbath and *kreplach* for the festivals is more highly regarded than their own daughters and certainly more than their Jewish daughters-in-law.¹³

We likewise find that a very sizeable majority of our respondents have become successfully integrated into their spouses' families. However, unlike Rabbi Kirshenbaum's respondents, most converts in our study have validated their Jewish credentials through more than gastronomical proficiency.

Although our respondents tend to have marital and family relations which are as "successful" as those found among born Jews, they do face a number of unique problems. Being a Jew may be hard, but it is obvious that becoming one is harder still.

12. Berman, p. 182.

13. David Kirshenbaum, *Mixed Marriage and the Jewish Future* (New York: Bloch, 1958), p. 107.

Jewish Identity: The Surveyor Surveyed

MARK A. BERNHEIM

The individual who seeks in himself the hidden content of his Jewishness must accept the risk of what he may find. Like all serious adventures in self-discovery, such a search is an affirmation of a faith in value and demands moral courage as well as a certain inner stability This emotion which I seemed to find in the Jewish psyche arose from the sense of living within a cycle of repetitions that time after time brought Jews to re-enact, individually and collectively, certain characteristic events of their history¹

In so far as Roth associated the homogeneity of the Lower East Side with Jewishness, with safety, with a fixed point of reference, his has been an "anchorless" life.²

CONTEMPORARY JEWISH LITERATURE IN THIS country, as one might well expect, is largely connected with the complex questions of assimilation and Jewish identity. In the centuries since modern Jewry began to move out of actual ghettos and face the need to define itself in new surroundings, no issue has been examined from as many facets as the maintenance of Jewish identity under assimilationist pressures. Jewry has had to come to terms with increasingly secular societies in almost every nation that it has inhabited, societies which have come to expect only diminishing influence of their own established or quasi-official religions. Small wonder that the always numerically insignificant Jewish communities have felt the threat of eventual disappearance both from within and without, and have seen their most sensitive minds turn to the implications of generalized assimilation.

Of the many volumes written on the nature of that problem, Milton M. Gordon's *Assimilation in American Life* remains the most useful for the wide definition that it proposes to account for the acceptance of over forty million immigrants into the mainstream of American life. Gordon pulls together numerous past definitions which speak of the interpenetration and fusion of various groups' memories, sentiments, attitudes, experiences, and histories to form a cultural solidarity occupying a common territory and functioning smoothly to achieve a national existence. Each group willingly drops its past image and loyalties in exchange for the

1. Harold Rosenberg, "Jewish Identity in a Free Society," in *Discovering the Present* (Chicago, 1973), p. 267.

2. Sanford Pinsker, "Henry Roth — in *Galut*," in *Midstream*, XXVI (May 1980): 58.

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willingness of the dominant faction to accept *it* as part of the national life. Indeed, assimilation must be, Gordon notes, interpenetrating, for the peoples to be absorbed must receive at least tacit acceptance that prejudice and discrimination will eventually fade from the expected practice of the majority.

American Jews, especially the multitudes of East European refugees and their descendants, have been drawn deeply into the complex issue of assimilation through the widespread acceptance which they have gained in American life during this century, and the great burst of Jewish letters which has culminated in two Nobel Prizes within the last several years (both to naturalized "American" Jews!) comes after decades of near-dominance in the novel and in criticism. Who is not familiar with the vast Jewish contributions to American popular culture coinciding with a declining Jewish population? Spiralling intermarriage and conversion, decreasing birth and affiliation rates, the continued drawing upon Jewish cultural and religious identity by a pluralistic spirit of acceptance and toleration — such are the contradictions of an American Jewish community, if one can use the term at all, which is highly educated secularly and, simultaneously, highly ignorant "Jewishly." As a consensus grows that Jewish identity faces increasing dangers of evaporation into a pluralistic society, leading Jewish writers return to explorations of basic questions: What is a Jew? How does a Jew know he is a Jew? How will others?

A seemingly routine short story such as Henry Roth's "The Surveyor" (which first appeared in the *New Yorker* in August 1966), has provoked wide discussion each time I have taught it as a part of courses in Jewish literature, although on the surface all readers react initially to it as a confirmation of one man's religious identity. But I would propose here to demonstrate that Roth has written a complex work that conceals multiple and unresolved attitudes toward assimilation and observance. Readers react according to their own unspoken (and perhaps unrealized) assumptions concerning their own terms of peace with their heritage.

Writing in the May 1980 issue of *Midstream*, Sanford Pinsker relates the particulars of an interview that he conducted with Roth before the latter was scheduled to emigrate to Israel as part of his rediscovered Jewish heritage. Roth has long fascinated critics for the extensive period of non-production which followed publication of *Call It Sleep* more than forty-five years ago. Admittedly one of the masterworks of American fiction, the book was followed by "the long gasp of silence," as Pinsker calls the period up to roughly 1968, during which Roth buried himself in self-willed *galut*, dropping out ahead of the tide. Pinsker sees the decades of odd jobs and self-study as an example of "our century's most fashionable condition," a complete alienation which is, in effect, a deadend of total liberation from all ties:

Rather than parochial restrictions, one discovers wide-ranging choices. The whole array of sheer stuff can, and often does, make one giddy. It can also

lead to disappointment, emptiness, and an overwhelming sense of loss. The man with an infinite number of addresses has no home . . . [Roth] had cut his ties with the insular Jewish family at the end of *Call It Sleep* and, later, he would perform the same surgery on Jewishness itself.³

Pinsker notes that Roth was a “man whose mixed marriage was symptomatic of an entire generation’s attempt at assimilation,” and quotes from a symposium held by *Midstream* in 1963 (“The Meaning of *Galut* in America Today”) in which Roth stated that “contemporary Jews should be orienting themselves toward ceasing to be Jews.” Pinsker then decides that two factors are responsible for the evident change in Roth’s outlook in the past decade: the re-appearance of *Call It Sleep* in the early 60s and its wide appreciation, and the Israeli martial victories in the face of grave danger. Whether or not he is correct (he emphasizes that Roth himself was much taken with Pinsker’s diagnosis of the writer’s “anchorless” existence), we must note that Roth’s story, “The Surveyor,” appeared in 1966, and already clearly indicates the deepest ambivalence towards Jewish identity, showing that the process of revived Jewishness was already well under way and, doubtless, resulted from years of weighing both sides.

Indeed, several earlier investigations into the modern puzzlement over Jewish identity bear strong connections to the fictive treatment of the issue that Roth was to provide in 1966. Harold Rosenberg, in *Discovering the Present*, has collected several articles written decades before on the question of Jewish identity: in 1950 he delivered a speech to a group of engineering graduate students at Columbia University; the speech eventually appeared in the same year in *Commentary* as “Jewish Identity in a Free Society.” He notes that, in the modern age of anonymity, intellectuals enjoy an unheard-of freedom to define themselves and, indeed, this “naturalized ego” (rather than a preordained one) is the property of virtually all men who recognize their unsettling freedom from past restraints: “If there were a Jewish community in the old sense . . . to be anything but a total Jew would be an individual aberration. Such, however, is plainly not the case with us, when Jewish identity is so much a matter of acts of will and intellect.”

Rosenberg goes on to the quotation which began this article, linking the search for Jewish identity with a generalized need to find the hidden self through immersing oneself in a common history that unites past, present, and future:

So the Jew may be identified by his history, by the presence of the Jewish past within him. He is a Jew in that his experience contains the possibility of linking itself with the collective and individual experiences of earlier Jews. Through him the dead ancestors can take their place in the present. And this occurs . . . through his own creative acts which they inspire . . . The Jew whom the Jewish past has ceased to stir, whom every collective anguish or battle for salvation passes by, may tomorrow find himself in the very center

3. Ibid., p. 59.

of the movement toward the future. Like the reputation of the *zaddik*, a community is often built by surprise. Perhaps it is just those Jews who arrive from nowhere who will come to resemble most closely their remotest and most venerable grandfathers.⁴

Three years previously, Rosenberg had written "Pledged to the Marvelous," also known as "Letter to a Jewish Theologian," as a response to Will Herberg's "From Marxism to Judaism," both appearing in 1947 in *Commentary*. Taking issue with Herberg's rationalistic approach to Jewish values, Rosenberg posited a mystical significance to the Jewish recreation of history:

Convinced of his homecoming according to a pattern which is eternal, the Jew plunges deeper and deeper into the wilderness of the world . . . Like Homer's Odysseus, the Jew long ago discovered the bittersweet wine of human joy — to struggle forward to the halls of yesterday . . . the human condition . . . The tragic irony of the Jew's position is that he wars against time from the inside of time . . . The Jew must repeat the plot of his existence or become — nothing . . . Thus he constantly raises the question of existence in his own mind and in others: "Why should the Jew exist?" . . . He helps the enemy by making it easy to identify him. The Jew's misery is the price of being someone . . . Judaism is altogether a matter of remaining unique.⁵

Finally, Daniel Bell's "Reflections on Jewish Identity," which appeared in *Commentary* in 1961, made explicit the connection between modernity and alienation, especially for Jews who have chosen to reject past traditions: "The break has meant that the individual himself becomes the source of all moral judgment. But once experience is the touchstone of truth . . . then alienation from society . . . is inescapable." Yet Bell notes that many cannot fully renounce their Jewishness and, so, are left uneasily situated:

What is left, then, for one who feels himself to be a Jew, emotionally rather than rationally? . . . For me, to be a Jew is to be part of a community woven by memory — the memory whose knots are tied by the *yizkor* . . . the tie to the dead, the link to the past, the continuity with those who have suffered and, through suffering, have made us witnesses . . . However much, as moderns, we reject the utterances of authority and the injunctions of ritual, the religious link with our fellows is the link of memory and its articulation . . . One lives, therefore, as a Jew, through the meaning of the *yizkor*, through the act of commemoration.⁶

The claim I am making is not that Henry Roth wrote these words, or that he definitely read what Rosenberg, Bell, or the numerous other Jewish writers and critics had to say about Jewish identity during the decades of his silence. Rather, we shall see that "The Surveyor," in its way,

4. Rosenberg, *Op. cit.*, pp. 268–269.

5. Ibid., "Letter to a Jewish Theologian," pp. 257–258.

6. Daniel Bell, "Reflections on Jewish Identity," in Peter I. Rose, *The Ghetto and Beyond: Essays on Jewish Life in America* (New York, 1961), pp. 469–470.

is equally about the anguish that these men felt as they attempted to understand why they could not rest easy with, or without, their past. Successful, self-defined, and thoroughly accepted, they could not free themselves from memories not even fully theirs, since, as Bell comes to realize,

[f]or the intellectual, the greatest risk of memory is its repression — the past is only allowed to come back in the form of self-hate, shame . . . caricaturing . . . and all the other modes of aggression that arise from the refusal to accept the tension of being in a minority, and the need to balance the insistent demands of the past with the needs of the present.⁷

A preliminary reading of “The Surveyor” may fail to disclose these deep sources of repressed anguish. On the contrary, a sense of familiarity in the discovery of far-off Judaica lends a certain charm and hominess to the story. Factually, it concerns a retired American teacher, Aaron Stigman, touring Spain with his non-Jewish wife, Mary. At his insistence, the couple are spending extra time in Seville where he has rented surveyor’s equipment for as yet unknown reasons. Seville, of course, calls to mind a center of medieval Jewish life, the location in 1391 of the first outbreak of violence against Spanish Jews and a later center of Inquisition activity against new converts. But, early in the story, all we know is that Stigman intends to locate a precise spot at which he will lay a wreath, for purposes that he seems strongly unwilling to verbalize. The couple make several covert expeditions to a place along one of the principal boulevards and, at the last try, he succeeds in leaving the wreath (which we hardly see) alongside a monument to El Cid, seemingly in the midst of nowhere. Despite his precautions and obvious anxieties, they are observed by many, and their hurried mission is interrupted by a puzzled member of the *Guardia Civil*. Stigman immediately offers to pay either for his affront or to remove it, but a certain thinly-veiled hostility leads the officer to ask them to accompany him to police headquarters. There Stigman continues to hide his real motives until an enigmatic state’s attorney, Señor Ortega, apparently guesses at the true significance of the act and easily obtains their release. Ortega then proves a courtly guide, leading them to a tiny cafe where he gently extracts the truth from Stigman — namely, the site that he has commemorated in his fashion is important because it was there that the *conversos* — lapsed Catholics secretly re-embracing their hidden Judaism — were burned during the Inquisition.

But, in the story, Ortega intrigues us because he has more than a state’s attorney’s knowledge of the subject, and mysteriously hints that in his own “pure” Spanish background there may be Marranos (or *conversos*) whose presence he has never before revealed. There is even a sentimentalized “*l’chaim*” scene in which the three drink to each other’s faiths, and the Stigmans are left with the distinct impression of a rare discovery of

7. *Ibid.*, p. 471.

hidden Judaica. Most readers similarly might conclude that Roth has all along intended for us to identify with the *gemütlichkeit* of the resolution, the sense of mission accomplished and communal safety. Here in Seville, center of ancient Jewry, there are highly-placed secret sympathizers who cleverly materialize to help fellow Jews out of difficult spots and, in fact, aid in the making of a grand gesture to martyrs of ages past. How nice and neat. How comfortable. How comforting.

That, however, is not what "The Surveyor" is about. Unless I am badly misreading Roth, his fifteen-page story aims at, and achieves, a far more worthy level of Jewish consciousness, although not a cheery one for those concerned with the maintenance of Jewish identity. There is no easy resolution to the problem of a man who claims to be honoring secret Jews but is, himself, the most secret of them all. After Ortega leaves the Stigmans they are, of course, completely "free," freer, in fact, than ever before in Spain. But Aaron Stigman is obviously shaken by the experience, loses his way in old Seville, and winds up losing the wreath he has been clutching surreptitiously throughout almost all of the story. This post-resolution ending indicates that Roth could neither fully accept nor reject an easy return to Judaism, but sought to reveal the ambiguities of painful self-knowledge.

What is the nature of this main character, who undergoes such a radical transformation in the course of the story? We must come to terms with him if we are to see what Roth is really concerned with, for it is clear that the principal interest in "The Surveyor" is not on Judaism, as we might have at first suspected, but, rather, on the nature of the individual Jew who claims to — and may, indeed, be — defending it (and here a bow to the "other" Roth's "Defender of the Faith"). Judaism, after all, has a long and involved history beyond the Stigmans and the Ortegas, as well as their oppressors. But what of Stigman himself? Does he find comfort in his role? Does he grow as a character and evolve to greater self-awareness? If he is the "surveyor," skilled in finding directions and mapping courses for others, what, in truth, has he surveyed, what has he missed from his field of vision, and how reliable are his results? For him? For us? For this is a story, I propose, not about familiar and comfortable Judaism popping up unexpectedly in an odd corner, but about the modern Jew and his confused sense of identity.

Aaron Stigman is disturbed, if not disturbing. In Bell's terms, he is battling his own repression and finding the costs high. When we first meet him, he is desperately nervous over something he is about to do, and we cannot be certain if he really desires to do it at all. Roth notes that "he seemed to work as though he were doing something he was not thoroughly practiced at but something he had rehearsed . . . with a certain nervous haste." Later on, this notion of a show of faith, a rehearsal for a *show* without substance and, therefore, not really fit for public eyes, will reappear in Stigman's confession of true faithlessness. In the course of the

story, he is portrayed as someone who has not been honest about matters touching his own uneasy heritage. Ostensibly, he has come to Seville determined to make a gesture that he fancies "grand." That is, he is armed with all the proper platitudes, aiming to create an impression of piety without substance, his own truce in a self-declared war with his ancestors' faith: "I have made my gesture, for whatever it was worth;" "I was going to make my gesture. I made it;" "I am attempting to refrain from insulting the country I am visiting." Even Ortega supplies him with the ultimately empty remark — empty for Stigman because he has no consciousness — "A candle in consciousness is enough, is it not?" How easy it would have been for Roth to have Stigman reply affirmatively! How beguiling the notion that secret demonstrations of faith will suffice! But that belongs to a different story, one that Roth did *not* write: Stigman cannot take the easy way out and accept fulfillment as a twentieth-century vindicator of *converso* martyrdom. He must remain uneasy and unfulfilled. A driven man (he is, in fact, chauffeured all over town), he finally must admit to Ortega, "Oh, no, I left the faith of my ancestors many years ago." As Bell notes,

Coming to terms with this kind of repression often leads to alienation from Judaism, to the feeling of its insufficiency The alienated Jew is the Jewish orphan. He comes "out of himself," rather than out of the past. He is homeless. The present is his only reality. Lacking a past, he can have no notion of continuity, or any image of the future. For him there can be no fulfillment Finally . . . there is the risk of attrition. It is not a question of assimilation, for that is a matter of choice, the choice of severing all ties, and one which is made consciously. Attrition is not chosen — it is a wasting away. There is a word, Jew, but no feeling. And this becomes the most tragic consequence of identification solely through memory.⁸

One of the ironies of the story, however, is that Stigman, despite his certainty when questioned, has not "left the faith," or, at least, that his attempt to find satisfaction in such an abandonment has failed. Roth shows him as a man drawn compulsively to danger, both exposing and hiding, advancing and retreating. He chooses Sunday morning, of all times, to act "unseen," and returns, compulsively, to the scene of the offense after first turning tail. In Rosenberg's terms, he is helping the "enemy" apprehend the "criminal," himself. Though he proclaims to the attorney that he has long before left his faith, and though he assures his Protestant wife ("Mary") that in Seville there are too many commemorations of Catholic martyrs and "none for mine — or what used to be mine. Why shouldn't there be some acknowledgement?," he nonetheless feels a need that he must fulfill. In effect, Stigman is "witnessing" (as noted by Bell) his own born faith, and Ortega's profession is not accidentally chosen by Roth. He is the foil to Stigman's lack of identity: "The man's face, wrinkling and unwrinkling, must have been a formidable thing to confront from a witness stand." Seville, then, and Ortega himself, become a

8. Ibid., pp. 471–472.

courtroom and a judge, a witnessing scene for Stigman to re-connect himself through commemoration, although he continues to think mistakenly that the precise surveying tools need be rented from someone else. Rather, the coordinates that he seeks are buried within his own discontinuous tradition, and the journey to find them has but begun.

At a key point in the story, Ortega, who may also represent a sort of Old World wisdom and experience, analyzes the weakness in Stigman's confused nature: "You intrigue me enormously. . . . That any man would be so — I hesitate to use the word — so naive. I do not know which word to use." And Ortega is right, for Stigman is all too naive in terms of self-knowledge. A retired teacher, accustomed to being followed (early in the story Mary is described as "obedient"), he is completely ignorant of his own deepest needs. Although driven to act far out of character, he cannot follow through meaningfully, and instead of the grand gesture that he imagines, he reverts to secrecy and fear. Then, when caught and given the opportunity to explain and make the public act valid, he refuses to own up. To all questions, he pretends that he was only seeking something of "sentimental value to myself. I had no other reason for doing so. . . . That is something I do not care to discuss." Yet is religion a matter of "sentimental value" alone? Can such shallowness account for the depth of his motive? Is there not a connection between his fate and those of the martyrs he halfway remembers? Has he not taken a step greater than he himself consciously realizes to rejoin history and thereby rediscover his own identity? In his way, he repeats Kafka's well-known lament, "What have I in common with the Jews? I have hardly anything in common with myself."

Significantly, Roth provides help for us in a description of the people's perceptions of Stigman as he is led away, muttering

bleakly . . . "Well, for God's sake". . . . Two monks who were at that moment striding toward them, vigorous, bearded young men with bare feet in sandals and white cord about brown robes, noted the wreath in Stigman's hand and looked at the trio alertly. It was evident they thought the policeman was escorting two tourists bent on a commemorative act. And so others appeared to think. . . . Street photographers . . . nodded in deference, and a chestnut vendor halted . . . to peer at the wreath through the white smoke.⁹

The common people, then, understand better than he; the very population to whom Stigman should be addressing his gesture do, in fact, grasp its significance although he would deny at that very moment what he is doing. Devout Christians and common street people can see through the "white smoke" which blinds him. He persists in denial, covers the wreath with an agent of very scant protection, a raincoat, which, at the end of the story, he lifts to disclose nothing at all, since he has lost the symbol altogether, having forgotten it in the cafe. Or rather, the wreath has its

9. Henry Roth, "The Surveyor," in *Jewish-American Short Stories*, ed. Irving Howe (New York, 1977), p. 58.

own existence as a commemoration of his own lost faith, his own attempted impervious identity (and such a symbol: a "wreath" for Jewish martyrs! this exotic *yizkor* ceremony that he is conducting for himself alone.)

In the story, Roth gives us a very strange "Aaron." If we recall his Biblical namesake, we bring to mind the spokesman for the Hebrews, the high priest, explicator, and mediator to the nations. Roth's Aaron, despite the heritage of his very Hebrew name, is no spokesman at all. Indeed, he may represent more fully the shadowy "other" side of Biblical Aaron, maker of the Golden Calf, compromiser, and temporizer. Stigman (and may there also be echoes of "stigma" in this peculiar name?) can embody both traditions, of course, for he does possess a double consciousness of which he himself is only partially aware. A surveyor on a pretend holiday, he turns the precision instruments upon himself when he least expects, for he has convinced himself that they are on a foreign landscape. Thinking to lay to rest a troublesome spirit of someone else's faith, he persists in being dishonest to his own. The surveyor's view received through his distorted eyepiece is *unfamiliar* rather than classic: it is his own interior and foreign void. As he proclaims freedom from all past ties, he is, in effect, acting out an ancient drama of self-recognition achieved through suffering, Greek as well as Hebrew in origin. When man looks elsewhere than his own self to find himself, he presumes upon the patience of the gods. Rosenberg's allusion to the Greek spirit of tragic self-discovery continues to resound:

To raise the question of existence seriously is a mark of tragic feeling [but] to answer the question is proof that one has not understood it. The Jew suffers under the pressure of events because he has no escape from being. . . . The Jew's misery is the price of being someone. . . . The suffering of the Jew is a quality of the kind of life that insists on being nothing but itself. . . . In every generation the Jews reiterate what was known to the Greek tragic poets: that to remain inflexibly true to oneself is to be exposed to all the ruses of events. Yet once the roots of a human identity have been revealed, there is no turning aside.¹⁰

The truth of "The Surveyor" is ironic yet plain. There is no turning aside: Stigman reveals *himself* as the *converso* for whom the wreath is most properly intended. He has had to journey far from his origins in order to find them, run from the self in order to confront it. A *converso* (who can converse fluently, too), he makes certain to be discovered passively in a public display over an issue that he claims is "private." His witnessing of faith must be known to others, though he is not even aware of it himself. In the confrontation with Ortega, he tries to mask the essential falseness of his position through cliché and homiletic recital: "They [*conversos* who secretly clung to their old Judaic faith] were men and women who were put to death because they would not renounce their faith. . . . I honored them because of their heroic constancy in the hour of trial." But what

10. Rosenberg, *Op. cit.*, p. 258.

Stigman will not say is that *he* has, in fact, renounced his faith, *he* has had no constancy in his trial, *he* has shown no honor in his defense. However, *he* has not been put to death, for he lives in a different time which makes different demands upon the faithful and unfaithful. Yet he has died a spiritual death, inside, quite literally mortified by the ease with which he can both renounce *and* cling, run from Judaism yet never escape it, end where he began. Stigman would undoubtedly renounce the significance of formal "mourning" as part of organized religion, but he meticulously observes his own commemoration in very foreign terms and sadly notes, after placing the odd wreath, "There's little one can do against oblivion, anyway." Roth continues, "He was silent. 'And now?' He finally turned toward his wife. 'Where shall we go now?'"⁷ The pathos of the scene is unmistakable. Who shall mourn Aaron Stigman? Who shall say *yizkor* for him?

In "The Surveyor," Stigman's observance (used in both senses of the word) is of his own alienation, his discomfort with a carefully constructed identity that shows signs of deterioration in old age. Rather deliberately, he wills penance for having believed in absolute freedom, discovering a paradoxical imprisonment that is actually more menacing than the political repressions inherent in Franco's Spain. It is there that a free, assimilated and assimilationist American Jew meets himself. Unlike Ortega who does, indeed, belong, and knows it, Stigman comes to understand that he belongs nowhere, is nowhere connected and can nowhere make a meaningful act of commemoration for others or for himself. In a "free society" he is strangely imprisoned in a fortress that is largely self-made.

Roth carefully avoids an easy resolution for this story, just as there is no facile answer for the problem that it touches. Rather, we find versions of faith alongside each other. In Seville, Hebrew and two major Christian faiths encounter Islam, as well as paganism. Ortega quotes a Spanish folk-saying, "*Los españoles siempre pagan*," taken by the linguist Stigman to mean "Spaniards always pay," when the lawyer insists upon picking up the tab in the cafe. But a Spanish dictionary tells us that *pagan* is closely related to the word for pagan, too, and there are indications that Roth intends both to function. For its martial excesses, its Inquisition, its posings to grandeur (El Cid), Spain has, indeed, "paid," with the backwardness that resulted. Yet, in the midst of three great faiths, Spain retains a primitive, pagan quality (Carmen with her great cross and equally great gypsy faith in cards and dice) which transcends faith, capturing the elusive essences of belief in the visual symbol. The Stigmans are guided about Seville, after they leave Ortega, by the great weathervane on top of La Giralda, originally an Arab mosque but now a cathedral "supported by Moorish Minarets;" "the Giralda, *la Fe*, the weathervane. Faith stood on her high pinnacle above the Cathedral, pointing at every wind with her palm branch of triumph." As is its function, this indicator will shift with each passing influence, but will never rest totally still. Man eternally will need

its guidance, Roth seems to show, little matter which direction it indicates at any given moment. It is there, for those willing to look up to it.

Stigman, at the story's beginning completely in command (he thinks), by the end is befuddled. Because they have told Ortega that they no longer need him, the couple get lost, finding the old city "a maze." Now Mary, who until this point has played a negligible role, announces, "I've got the city guide to Seville in my purse," and Aaron must take her arm to be led out. Except for Stigman, then, everyone seems able to read — or survey — the directions. Only the false "surveyor" is lost. Similarly, Roth reveals the complexity of the question when he has Stigman and Ortega get nowhere in their attempt to define the *conversos* as "Jews who were also Spaniards" or "Spaniards who were also Jews." The poignancy of this question for the modern Jewish audience, sharpened by recent historical experience, is overwhelming, indicating that Roth's story does, indeed, attempt to reach the heart of unanswered doubts over assimilation and acculturation.

Yet let us not forget that the questions must remain basically without resolution. As Pinsker noted the contradictory elements within Roth which doubtless contributed to his decades-long withdrawal from the public, so, in "The Surveyor," a serious reading discloses that Roth is both within and apart from the assimilationist tradition. Since assimilation naturally implies a liberal society — open, just, tolerant, fraternally-motivated — it involves, as well, a certain faith in an abstract mankind and the ability of all to coexist. Thus, the conclusion of the story, as the confused individual wanders, temporarily lost under the permanent weathervane which may symbolize the assimilationist dream of a place "where peoples meet," may point, like the weathervane itself, in varying directions. Stigman himself remains perplexed, his mission basically *unaccomplished*. In Rosenberg's terms, the dead ancestors have taken their places through the creative acts they have inspired him to carry through, and Jewish history *has*, in a sense, been relived; but, for Aaron Stigman, the future remains unilluminated. As Bell concludes:

The alienated Jew is the Jewish orphan. . . . For him there can be no fulfillment. . . . Yet, in the awareness of his rejection, his life is Jewish, too: he is one of a community of exiles whose common experiences are molded by the common fate. . . . All this has been played out before. . . . In the *Pirke Avot* is the famous saying of Rabbi Tarfon: "It is not thy duty to complete the work, but neither art thou free to desist from it." This is the question raised when one realizes that one does not stand alone, that the past is still present, and that there are responsibilities of participation even when the community of which one is part is a community woven by the thinning strands of memory.¹¹

As a final postscript, I should like to add that an extremely perceptive adult student at the Chautauqua Institution in New York once pointed

11. Bell, *Op. cit.*, pp. 471, 476.

out to me that "The Surveyor" calls to mind Arthur Miller's prize-winning story, "Monte Sant' Angelo," which does, indeed, raise very similar points concerning the meaning of the American Jewish experience. Here Miller (also considered generally "silent" on Jewish themes) portrays a stiff-necked American Jew uncomfortably accompanying an Italian friend upon an exploration of post-war Italy. Interestingly enough, we never learn the first name of this "Bernstein," but his Italian buddy, Vinny Appello (whose patronym signifies "name" or "call"), has a wealth of names, which are explained as he meets welcoming relatives. Bernstein's discomfort and sense of alienation grow until he almost fancies himself an orphan (again the classical parallel);

He remembered his father's telling of his town in Europe, a common barrel of water, a town idiot, a baron nearby. That was all he had of it, and no pride, no pride at all. Then I am an American, he said to himself. And yet in that there was not the power of Appello's narrow passion. He had never in his life sensed so strongly that the past could be so peopled, so vivid with generations, as it had been with Vinny's aunt an hour ago. . . . And standing there he sensed a broken part of himself and wondered with a slight amusement if this was what a child felt on discovering that the parents who brought him up were not his own and that he entered his house not from warmth but from the street, from a public and disordered place.¹²

Bernstein thus comes to see his own identity as unformed, his rootlessness a cause for sorrow and rigidity. Then, while debating whether or not to eat meat on Friday in a restaurant, the men unexpectedly encounter one "Mauro di Benedetto" (he without a proper *last* name) who instantly strikes Bernstein as a long-lost and doubtless un-self-knowing Jew. An itinerant cloth peddler, this exotic figure follows a family tradition to rush home before dark on Friday evening with a huge loaf of fresh bread atop his bundle. Bernstein is exultant at seeing the Italian explain his customs thus, even though he himself has no such traditions:

There was an irony in it he could not name. And yet pride was running through him. Of what he should be proud he had no clear idea; perhaps it was only that beneath the brainless crush of history, a Jew had secretly survived . . . so that his very unawareness was proof, a proof as mute as stones, that a past lived. A past for me, Bernstein thought, astounded by its importance for him, when in fact he had never had a religion or even, he realized now, a history. . . . He saw that his life had been covered with an unrecognized shame. . . . They walked side by side down the steep street away from the church. The town was empty again. . . . A few pale stars had come out. The shops were all shut. Bernstein thought of Mauro di Benedetto going down the winding, rocky road, hurrying against the setting of the sun.¹³

Though Miller's story ends on this note of optimistic self-discovery (ironically brought about through a possible Jew who must ask, "Are they

12. Arthur Miller, "Monte Sant' Angelo" (1951), in *I Don't Need You Anymore* (New York, 1967), p. 61.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 69-70.

Catholics, the Hebrews?”), it, too, raises important doubts about the lasting effects that such late knowledge can have upon American Jewry. Assimilation, we have seen in these stories, brings with it its own price structure. Though characters may come to some limited knowledge late in their lives, we may wonder about the kinds of existences they have been leading before, and how prevalent such a loss of value systems and belief may be among Jews at large, as well as how many can ever be expected to become enlightened at any point. Like the Spaniards who “always pay,” so, too, Jews have a history of payment in all senses of the word — payment for their existence, for their own shortcomings, and for those of others. We know that each generation establishes its own currency by which it justifies its place in a world which has had an uncomfortable history of turning hostile when least expected, of ending the dream (for some a nightmare) of assimilation by cancelling the terms of acceptance, of withdrawing the credit of promised acceptance upon which assimilation for all peoples has been based. We know also that each generation, if fortunate, will never be called upon to pay for its credit in ultimate terms, but this knowledge cannot erase the fact that some have, indeed, paid the price. For American Jewry at this moment in its development, probing artists, even those who have maintained decades of silence, can apparently still be relied upon to ask the vital questions recalling us from our seeming comforts and helping us to see our lives suspended between acceptance and rejection, disappearance and survival, insight and blindness — surveying others but not often self-surveyed.

Invoking the Holocaust

DEBORAH E. LIPSTADT

IF THE PACE AT WHICH COURSES IN Holocaust studies, special *yizkor* services, martyrs' memorials, lecture series on the Holocaust and a variety of research centers are multiplying is an accurate measure of communal interest, then the Holocaust has become a central item on the contemporary Jewish agenda. This spurt of interest, a phenomenon of the 1970s, is a striking contrast to the decades immediately following the war when the Holocaust was noticeable only by virtue of its absence from the spectrum of Jewish communal concerns.

Even as the Holocaust is accorded this new-found prominence, a distinct opposition is emerging. In many respects it can be described as a backlash. Opposition stems from a number of different sources, some new and some old, some within the Jewish community and some outside.

Among those outside the community who attack the interest and emphasis on the Holocaust are historical revisionists, who deny that the Holocaust ever occurred and argue that the "myth" of the murder of six million Jews is Zionist chicanery. Other critics have not denied the Holocaust, but are angry about Jews' emphasis of it. During the Andrew Young "affair" some Black leaders declared that they had "heard enough about the *Jews'* Holocaust." That such feelings exist should surprise only the most troglodytic in the Jewish community. These are not new sentiments and, in certain cases, are reflective of old, deeply-seated, anti-Jewish hostilities dressed in a slightly new garb. Their agenda is age-old.

"There's No Business Like Shoah Business"

What is new is the increasing resistance from within the Jewish community to that which has been grossly, but somewhat accurately, called "shoalogy."*

There are those who argue that there is "too much Holocaust"; that too much money, time and energy are being devoted to its commemoration; that the attention given it is unhealthy; that it has been "commercialized" by various groups and institutions for their own purposes; that institutions and individual careers have been built on gross exploitation of the surge of Holocaust interest; and that it has been used as a means of inculcating a heightened Jewish identity and strengthening religious observance.

Ironically, this sentiment emerges at a time when the establishment of

**Shoah* is the Hebrew term for Holocaust.

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legitimate centers for Holocaust studies has been held up by the minute pool of properly trained candidates for positions in them. Chairs in Holocaust studies at prestigious universities have remained empty because scholars are not available to occupy them. In this regard there has been anything but a surfeit of concern with the Holocaust.

Four arenas within which the Holocaust has been either misused, overused or abused may be broadly isolated. They include the educational, communal, religious and political, each of which shall be examined in this article.

The opposition to Holocaust study may be traced, in part, to its "exploitation." This is a complex issue, given that education is, by its very nature, value laden. It is transmitted with the objective of altering, to varying degrees, students' attitudes and perceptions of reality. The unwritten educational agenda, although often unacknowledged, is always present. Determining the legitimate and illegitimate uses of something so pregnant with meaning and emotion as the Holocaust is, therefore, particularly complex. While it is incontrovertible that there are lessons for both Jews and non-Jews to learn from this watershed event, there also exists the tendency of invidious exploitation of it.

Many of the reservations about the seemingly Holocaust-centered nature of contemporary Jewish activities have been voiced by those who teach Jewish studies. Scholars and students are disturbed by the fact that it is often taught in isolation from the remainder of Jewish history. The entire course of the Jewish experience is skewed so that the Holocaust and other instances of antisemitism become the cornerstone of that experience, resulting in what Salo Baron called the "lachrymose theory of Jewish history;" the tearful becomes the prototype.

Not only is the Holocaust taught — often by those thoroughly unqualified to do so — in isolation from the continuum of European and Jewish history, but specific aspects of it are analyzed as isolated entities, and a contemporary yardstick is used to determine "correct" actions. This results in simplistic and often inaccurate generalizations: resistance is considered in its narrowest context, with the ghetto fighters still seen as the primary, if not only, heroes; the religiously observant are considered to have meekly submitted to their death; and, above all, the onus is on the Jews to defend the manner in which they acted and not on the Germans to explain how they could have perpetrated this heinous crime, or on the world to explain its acquiescence to it. This troublesome aspect of dealing with the Holocaust could be alleviated by increasing sensitivity and training on the part of those who teach this material.

Invoking the Holocaust: A Shortcut to Jewish Community

Isolating the Holocaust from the historical continuum is, in measure, a problem of methodology and perspective and results in a misreading of

history. It is dangerous, but not as insidious as is the tendency among Jewish lay and religious leaders to use the Holocaust as a means of arousing feelings of latent Jewish identity. They “invoke” it and make it a code word for a series of Jewish experiences. Leaders cite the memory of the victims in what seems to have become a meaningless, reflexive action. They use it to capture the attention and to arouse the emotions of followers. They draw on the unarticulated sense of guilt that afflicts many of those who survived or who were personally left untouched by some twist of fate; e.g., the emigration of a parent or grandparent. In many cases they are not even drawing on this sense of guilt, but are trying to create it in order to make their listeners more pliable and responsive. Examples of this strategy are legion:

- A poster distributed by an agency, which raises funds for Israel, shows a Jew bowed before the Western Wall. The caption reads: “Thirty years ago he was up against a different wall.” The message is clear: he endured and survived; therefore, you must give.
- A community leader, engaged in an appeal for funds, reminds his listeners of the Entebbe hijacking and rescue. He says that when the Jewish passengers were separated from the other captives — actually it was the Israeli passengers who were separated, but by saying Jewish he makes sure his listeners will think of themselves as potential victims — it was the exact reenactment of the selection process at Auschwitz when Mengele stood, crop in hand, separating those who would live from those who would die.
- An institution devoted to Jewish learning builds its reputation and raises funds on the coattails of Holocaust commemoration. Among its projects is an epic multimedia show, budgeted at \$3.5 million, designed to “recreate the Holocaust experience.”
- A youth group tour of various sites of death camps in Europe and of Israel is advertised as an opportunity to expose the participants to “the Jewish experience.”
- The head of a local Jewish education committee proposes that a course in the Holocaust be offered in the community high school so that the students will understand “what it means to be Jewish.”

In these instances the Holocaust became a means of achieving communal cohesion and accelerating the process of identification. Not only is it exploitative of both victims and the Jew whose “consciousness is being raised,” but it reinforces the historically inaccurate message that antisemitism and persecution are the glue that has bound the Jewish people together, and that it is because of the ever-present threat of antisemitism that Jews must remain Jews. This is historically invalid and is an educational tactic that is fraught with danger. It can easily evoke, particularly in a post-Holocaust generation, a sense of rejection and not a sense of affiliation, of shame and not of honor. Furthermore, it helps to create precisely those conditions that evoke backlash.

Recently, Holocaust imagery has not only been “invoked” in order to

achieve Jewish objectives, but it has been called into service for other unrelated causes:

- The head of a local school board in a predominantly Jewish neighborhood, and the leader of the anti-school busing forces, tells the press that when she sees the local children being driven off in the school buses, she is reminded of the trucks that took Jews off to the death camps.
- The leader of the opposition to a housing project slated to be built in a Jewish neighborhood tells the press that, if they want to destroy our neighborhood, "they will have to take us outside and line us up against the wall, just like they did once before."

While there are events which are historically reminiscent of aspects of the Holocaust; e.g., the devastation currently being visited on the population of Southeast Asia, the appropriation and needless use of Holocaust imagery are distasteful and self-serving. By the use of such tactics, an atmosphere is created whereby those Jews whose children are to be bused, or whose neighborhood is to be altered, see themselves as potential victims of a crime similar or equivalent to the Holocaust. Their local political battles become imbued with an additional objective: preventing another Holocaust.

Irrespective of one's views on school busing or housing developments which threaten the stability of a neighborhood, drawing gross historical parallels between them and the deportation of Jews is exploitative. If one wishes to oppose them there are a myriad of reasons for so doing, but the Holocaust is not one of them.

The Holocaust: A Religious Surrogate

Among those who have reacted negatively to the increasing emphasis on the Holocaust have been members of the Orthodox community, who believe that the Holocaust is being used as a means of fostering segments of lapsed tribalism. They contrast themselves with other segments of the Jewish community who have only recently begun to maintain an active Jewish identity. The latter are best described not as a community of the pious, but as adherents to a "civil religion," a religion based on a shared history and tradition and not dependent on belief in an all-powerful Deity.

Many traditionally observant Jews distrust the notion of a civil religion and find it wanting because it neither leads to, nor is predicated on, increased religious observance. They already possess a myriad of positive symbols on which to rely and they reject the suggestion that Jewish suffering might serve as an agent for the maintenance of communal cohesion. When the Holocaust becomes the focal point for preservation of Jewish tradition, it is virtually transformed into a religious symbol.

[There is a certain irony to the fact that Orthodox Jews are distressed by the emphasis on the Holocaust. It was the program, publicity and fund-raising tactics of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, affiliated with

Yeshiva University of Los Angeles, which were partially responsible for accelerating the growth of opposition to Holocaust commemoration. Many individuals who were already troubled by the tendency to stress the Holocaust and use it as a means of arousing a sense of Jewish identity were catapulted into strong opposition on observing the *modus operandi* of the Wiesenthal Center.]

Although the Holocaust is used to inculcate a notion of civil religion, it must also be acknowledged that it is used by those at the other end of the religious spectrum as a rationale for, and a means of, furthering traditional observance. Emil Fackenheim correctly argued that were the Jews to disappear as a result of their own post-Holocaust actions — e.g., negative population growth, intermarriage and neglect of tradition — they would be completing Hitler's *endlösung* (final solution). In recent years there has been a tendency to expand upon this idea so that the refusal to grant Hitler a posthumous victory becomes *ta'am hamizvot*, the rationale for observing the commandments. Some rabbis and leaders of movements, particularly those engaged in "missionary work," cite the Holocaust and more recent tragedies — e.g., the massacre of 37 school children in Ma'alot as punishment for failing to observe Shabbat, to have *mezuzot* or to put on *tefillin*.

Jewish tradition has long recognized that "*bekhol dore omdim alaynu l'khalotaynu*" ["In every generation there arise those who wish to destroy us"] but it has never posited this as the reason why Judaism should survive, or why one should ensure the *kashrut* of the *mezuzot* on the door of one's home. A theology of suffering, endemic to other religious traditions, is foreign to Judaism. This, however, is exactly the theology which results from the transformation of the Holocaust into the rationale for Jewish survival and observance.

There is, however, another reason for the reservations harbored by many Orthodox Jews about the attention paid the Holocaust. Orthodox Jews sometimes tend to avoid confronting those issues which might call into question, or challenge, the basic premises of their faith. Those who build their lives on religious ritual as fulfillment of the Covenant consider emphasis of the lachrymose a distortion of the fundamental theological principles of Judaism. Rabbinic Judaism has always acknowledged that there are instances when the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper. The inclusion of the Book of Job in the Canon is but one example of Judaism's willingness to grapple with this seeming "failure" on the part of a just God. But, despite this willingness on the part of Rabbinic Judaism, its adherents tend to avoid stressing the point because of the unresolved and potentially faith-threatening issues that it raises.

Some Orthodox Jews contend that the Holocaust is used as a means of legitimizing a pre-existing denial of the existence of God. They argue that those who have already rejected the notion of a just and powerful Deity find the Holocaust a convenient means of rationalizing their deci-

sion. This argument is — at least in certain cases — correct, as has been noted by a prominent scholar whose area of expertise is the history of the Holocaust and who himself is an avowed secularist. He once observed that he is disturbed by those whose main concern is, “Where was God at Auschwitz?,” but who seem unconcerned by a more basic question: “Where was mankind at Auschwitz?” Although there is a certain legitimacy to the contention that those who raise this issue are oft-times simply trying to validate their denial of the existence of a just God, there nonetheless remains the troubling and, for some, genuinely faith-challenging question of God after Auschwitz. Theologians — among them Orthodox Jews — who have struggled with this issue have offered a variety of answers and solutions, many of which are *not* predicated on a denial of the existence of God.

It is not only the traditional community which is threatened and annoyed by a Holocaust-centered agenda, which posits that tragedy is the *raison d'être* for Jewish existence. In essence, the Holocaust itself poses far more fundamental questions for those who have shunned the particular in Judaism and have embraced the universal. Those who have pursued in Judaism's name the causes of others and who have denied the legitimacy of specific Jewish concerns must recognize that the Holocaust calls many of the premises of their belief into question. At least, the fact that it started in Germany unqualifiedly denies the contention that assimilation eradicates antisemitism.

One of the ways of avoiding these implications of the Holocaust is to appropriate it and its imagery for a variety of other causes. Everything becomes a Holocaust as universalists, Jewish and non-Jewish, make it the prototype for human suffering and social pathology. On these occasions emotion-laden hyperbole is often used to solidify the connection between the Holocaust and the other event. A young Reform rabbi, who was at most an infant during the war and who has been in the forefront of many liberal causes, tells the press that he went to a conference on Southeast Asian refugees with the “smell of the death camp ovens in his nostrils and the taste of ashes on his lips.”

When Mai-Lai and Hiroshima become the equivalent of Auschwitz they, *ipso facto*, become Jewish concerns. This universalization of the Holocaust is historically inaccurate, in that it fails to acknowledge the all-encompassing nature of the Nazi program to annihilate the Jews. Independent of age, sex or geographic locale, a Jew was an “enemy” of the Nazi regime and, therefore, a potential victim. This distinction does not diminish the often innocent and extreme suffering of people caught up in the net of one of these other post-Holocaust tragedies. It does, however, put the Holocaust in a particular and peculiar place in the annals of the history of suffering and prevents its transformation from a unique event to a general symbol of man's inhumanity to man.

Ironically there is a tendency towards universalization that is nur-

tured by those with a desire to commemorate the Holocaust and ensure that it not be forgotten. As Yehuda Bauer recently observed (*Jerusalem Post*, March 2-8, 1980), it has even surfaced in the work of the President's Commission on the Holocaust. The Commission redefined the Holocaust as the "sum total of all the murders and atrocities perpetrated by the Nazis on a myriad of different national and ethnic groups." This view, which has been propounded by Simon Wiesenthal, ignores reality and rewrites history. This is not to deny the suffering perpetrated by the Nazis on other people in Europe. Millions of Poles, Serbs and other groups were also murdered by the Germans. Their experience often differed not in the degree of physical suffering they were forced to endure, but in the ideological basis which was the "rationale" for it. There was no Nazi design to annihilate them physically from the face of the earth. The Nazis, themselves, had no qualms about admitting the qualitative difference between their attitude towards the Jews and other *Untermenschen* in Europe.

The historical revisionism, which is reflected in the inclination to expand the Holocaust and to make it the destruction of all of the Nazis' victims, reflects a belief on the part of some Jews that, unless they universalize their own experience, the world will fail to accord their suffering the importance that it deserves.

The Holocaust: A Political Metaphor

During the past decade, the Holocaust has been frequently used as a political metaphor. At the time of the Civil Rights upheavals, accusations of "genocide" were voiced by minority leaders engaged in a struggle over a range of issues that included everything from free breakfasts to police brutality. Terms such as "ghetto," "communal annihilation" and "extermination" became common rhetoric.

In recent years, one of the grosser and more malicious misappropriations of the Holocaust is the description of Israel as the Nazi Germany of the Middle East and the Palestinian Arabs as the "new Jews." The range of accusations against Israel has included creating a "Palestinian Auschwitz" to "engaging in crimes against humanity." Examples of such usage have surfaced on the podium of the United Nations, in the publications and statements of the American Friends Service committee, on the pages of the *Christian Science Monitor*, and in a variety of other forums. These insidious parallels are, in essence, naught but a contemporary metaphor used to disguise age-old antisemitic sentiments.

Ironically, a corresponding tendency politically to misappropriate Holocaust imagery has developed within the Jewish community. It is engaged in by those who have the best interests of the Jewish state in mind and who are anxious to ensure the welfare and well-being of the Jewish people. They tend to equate with the Holocaust all sorts of acts against the body politic of the Jewish people. The recent decision of the European

Common Market to try to bring the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) into the negotiation process was described by some Israeli leaders as the equivalent of the surrender at Munich in 1938. The Common Market decision did reflect a degree of surrender to terrorism and fear; but to label it in an almost reflexive action as Munich 1938 is a mistaken analogy.

An article in a prominent English language Jewish newspaper described the recently deceased Jordanian Foreign Minister, Sharaf, as a "known Nazi ally." When a reader pointed out to the editor that Sharaf, who died at age 41, was an infant during the Holocaust, the editor replied that in his adult years Sharaf had espoused fiercely anti-Israel statements and had associated with those who had once been Nazis. This, the editor contended, justified labeling him a Nazi ally.

There are parallels between recent acts of terror against Jews and the Holocaust, as was the case when a bomb was thrown at a group of Jewish children in Belgium who were boarding a bus for summer camp. The bomb did not have as its target soldiers or individuals who could in any way be seen as the enemies of a particular group or cause. These children certainly were a threat to no one. Like their European cousins of a previous generation, they were the enemy because they were Jews. However, even when there is historical justification for associating such incidents with the Holocaust, it may be—in light of the current trend to make everything the equivalent of the Nazi attempt to annihilate the Jewish people—wiser to avoid applying to them Holocaust imagery.

* * *

Ultimately, it is not only those who are religiously, spiritually or ideologically threatened by the Holocaust who are beginning to express a sense of discomfort with it. The Jewish public-at-large has been given numerous opportunities to shed tears and to experience an emotional catharsis, but fewer opportunities to grapple in a serious form with the challenging and perplexing questions of the Holocaust. It, too, is beginning to feel satiated. No longer is it rare for program committees and chairmen and women of Jewish organizations to reject suggestions for programs because they believe "people have heard enough about the Holocaust; they're tired of it." Although they have heard a lot, one can venture to assume that they know relatively little. In light of this exploitation, politicization and overutilization of the Holocaust, it is not surprising that those who recognize the complexity of this event and the necessity to study it with the utmost of scholarly care react with revulsion.

There *are* historical lessons and contemporary parallels which can be drawn from the Holocaust. Had there existed in the 1930s a place of refuge for the Jew in the poster, his back would not have been up against another wall. Had the world experienced real remorse about the Final Solution, then the peoples of Southeast Asia would not be suffering as

they are. However, the simplistic and insensitive reduction of the Holocaust to a fund-raising or political slogan is base gimmickry.

While there may be little those within the Jewish community can do about the appropriation of the Holocaust for a spectrum of other causes, there is much that they can do about their own overutilization and simplification of it. Not only is this tendency dangerous, but it is contrary to Jewish tradition, which recognizes that familiarity can breed irreverence, and even contempt.

Jewish tradition sets aside a spectrum of practices, implements, prayers, foods, and even tunes to be used at particular times and occasions. This idea of limited, prescribed and proscribed use governs not only religious practices, but the most intimate of relations.

The *raison d'être* offered by many traditionalists for the Laws of Family Purity (*taharat hamispahah*) is that after completing the required period of abstinence, husband and wife approach each other with the freshness of a new relationship. Irrespective of whether one accepts the validity of this explanation or not, it is reflective of a basic Jewish approach to life: that there is a "proper time for everything under heaven."

Although Jewish tradition has internalized and actualized *Ecclesiastes'* dictum, contemporary practices seem to ignore it. This is exemplified by the decision of some synagogues to have the entire congregation, not just the mourner, recite the *kaddish*. Such an action strips the *kaddish* of its particular import and prevents the mourner from using it as an emotional catharsis. Overusage has nullified the importance of the *kaddish* and threatens to do the same to the Holocaust.

Constant invocation of it, particularly when done in isolation from the historical continuum, will add force to the feeling that surfeit of attention has been paid to the Holocaust. On the other hand, a return to the 1950s and 1960s, when the Holocaust was noticeable by its almost total absence from the national Jewish communal and religious agenda, is also far from desirable. However, this is what may well happen if those who choose to "invoke" the Holocaust fail to recognize that there are times when silence has a greater impact than idle speech.

Ultimately, what is necessary is a balanced approach: a recognition that there is a time to talk of the Holocaust, to remember it, to study it, and to analyze how its historical lessons can be instructive for post-Holocaust Jewry — and a time to be silent.

Zacharias Frankel and the European Origins of Conservative Judaism

ISMAR SCHORSCH

IT HAS LONG BEEN OBSERVED THAT IDEOLOGICAL ambiguity is the hallmark of Conservative Judaism. Passion appears to substitute for clarity. In part, at least, the fault inheres in occupying the center. Extremes lend themselves to dogmatic clarity, if not cogent thinking. As perceived from the middle, the complexity of reality is hardly susceptible to explanation in terms of a single principle. Compounding this difficulty is the fact that the middle is caught in the crossfire of a two-front war. It must produce an arsenal of arguments for use against both left and right which, of necessity, often include ideas that are barely compatible.

No Conservative thinker has been indicted more often for ideological ambiguity than Zacharias Frankel, who founded and shaped European Conservatism through the force of his personality, the scope of his scholarship, and the power of his pen. Descended from a line of rabbis and raised in the Jewish metropolis of Prague, Frankel faced the challenge of modernity in all its intractable complexity. He was an energetic, emotional, combative man who combined a deep knowledge of Rabbinics with a firm command of the classics. In 1836 he came to serve the nascent Jewish community of Dresden as the representative of a new type of rabbinic leadership that was distinguished from its premodern counterpart in terms of function, education, and authority. Indeed, his reputation had already far transcended the borders of Saxony. For the next eight years Berlin courted Frankel to occupy its long vacant position of *Oberrabbiner*, the last time, in fact, that the community entertained the idea of appointing a supreme rabbinic authority. But Frankel preferred to fight for his vision of Judaism from the more tranquil corner of Dresden.¹ Finally, in 1854, when invited to head the newly opened modern rabbinical seminary of Breslau, the first in all of Germany, Frankel had a unique chance to institutionalize and disseminate that vision. He did not fail. By

1. See the fascinating correspondence between Frankel and Joseph Muhr pertaining to the Berlin position, published by S. Bernfeld, *AZJ*, 1898, pp. 343 ff. I will use the following abbreviations throughout this essay:

AZJ — *Die allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*

ZRIJ — *Zeitschrift für die religiösen Interessen des Judentums*

MGWJ — *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums*

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1879, some four years after his sudden death, the seminary had offered instruction to a total of 272 students, while graduating and placing in the most important Jewish communities of Europe nearly 120 teachers, preachers, and rabbis.² Frankel's conception of Judaism was well on the way to capturing the majority of German Jewry.

Though institutionalized in Breslau, that conception originated in Dresden where, during his eighteen years there, Frankel had labored to crystallize his views on the overwhelming dilemma of his generation: how to accommodate consciously an ancient, non-Western religion to the inescapable consequences of a radically new legal status without destroying its sense of integrity and continuity. With unsparing discipline, Frankel wrote voluminously to stem the tide of radical Reform, and though his German style tended to be prolix and passionate, with verbal precision often yielding to the urgency of the moment and the novelty of the challenge, his corpus is informed by a coherent religious position, clarified and deepened by frequent reformulation.

Since Frankel first entered the public arena during the heyday of German radical Reform, the meaning of his elusive terminology is rooted in his perception of his adversaries. Basically, Frankel regarded the Reformers as *Vernunftmenschen*, uncompromising rationalists determined to bring Judaism before the bar of reason. On the theoretical level, they attacked the entire legal edifice of Judaism by impugning its exegetical base. The arbitrary exegesis of the Rabbis repeatedly did violence to the plain sense of Scripture. On the practical level, the Reformers stood ready to abandon every ritual practice which they condemned as irrational or obstructing integration. Unfeeling, irreverent, and Jewishly unlearned, they arrogated to themselves the right to impose Reform from above, with a view to reducing Judaism to a set of abstract, enlightened, and innocuous propositions.³ Whatever the historical validity of this undifferentiated perception of contemporary Reform, there is no doubt that it exerted a decisive influence in shaping Frankel's own religious views.

There are five key terms in his rhetoric that require careful exposition: two adjectives, "positive" and "historical" and three nouns, *Volk*, *Geschichte* (history), and *Wissenschaft des Judentums* (the scholarly study of Judaism). Frankel invoked these terms repeatedly and only systematic textual analysis within the framework of his time can yield the full range of their meaning.

Perhaps the term least understood is "positive." What did Frankel intend to convey when he used the full phrase "positive, historical Judaism" for the first time during his brief and demonstrative attendance at the Frankfurt Rabbinical Conference of 1845?⁴ To be sure, the term

2. M. Brann, *Geschichte des jüdisch-theologischen Seminars in Breslau* (Breslau, n.d.), pp. 31-32.

3. ZRIJ, I (1844), *passim*.

4. *Protokolle und Aktenstücke der zweiten Rabbiner-Versammlung* (Frankfurt a.M., 1845), p. 19.

immediately suggests the opposite of “negative,” and, often enough in his writing Frankel condemned the program of radical Reform for being utterly negative, preoccupied with cutting and curtailings. But the word “positive” also carried a well-established technical connotation, implying either law in general or posited law as opposed to natural law. For example, the young Hegel wrote an essay, first published in 1907, entitled “The Positivity of the Christian Religion,” which indicted Christianity along Kantian lines for preserving, against the intent of its founder, Israel’s bondage to law. Though Kant had preferred to use the word statutory in his own critique of Judaism, it was its positivity that summed up the ethically abhorrent legal nature of classical Judaism and, in Jewish circles, radical Reformers like Michael Creizenach and the young Abraham Geiger employed the term with precisely that meaning before Frankel did.⁵

Equally pertinent to our analysis is the fact that, one year after the Frankfurt conference, Frankel published a seminal book expounding Rabbinic judicial procedure in terms of Western legal categories. Throughout this study, which marks the finest early effort at such conceptual translation, Frankel used the designation “positive” in its legal sense.⁶ Consequently, during the very years when he was articulating his conception of Judaism, he was also working in another context with the word “positive” as a technical term.

By choosing the adjective “positive” to describe his conception of Judaism, Frankel defiantly reasserted its fundamentally legal character and rejected any effort to dilute it. In Judaism, religious sentiments and eternal truths were expressed in prescribed behavior. Unabashedly, Frankel spoke of Judaism as “*eine Religion der That*,” a statutory religion of action rooted in revelation.⁷ In so doing, he provided a striking example of his persistent demand for *Selbständigkeit*, by which he meant a pursuit of equality based on self-respect that entailed no denigration of authentic Judaism.⁸ Despite the weighty critique of German luminaries from Kant to Bruno Bauer, law — as Mendelssohn had insisted to the embarrassment of his radical disciples — remained central to the Jewish religious

5. G.W.F. Hegel, *Early Theological Writings*, trans. by T.M. Knox (Philadelphia, 1971), pp. 67-181; Immanuel Kant, *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone*, trans. by T.M. Greene and H.H. Hudson (New York, 1960), pp. 115-128; M. Creizenach, *Schulhan Arukh*, II (Frankfurt a.M., 1837); Abraham Geiger, *Der hamburger Tempelstreit* (Breslau, 1842), pp. 34-35. Just a few of the many passages in which Frankel uses the term positive in its legal sense: *ZRIJ*, I (1844): 13; *ZRIJ* II (1845): 173-174; *ZRIJ* III (1846): 201; *Protokolle*, p. 19; *MGWJ*, IV (1855): 10. I am grateful to my friend, Chancellor Gerson D. Cohen, for suggesting this line of investigation to me years ago by bringing to my attention the discussion of the term in Shlomo Avineri, *Hegel's Theory of the Modern State* (London, 1972), pp. 13-33.

6. Z. Frankel, *Der gerichtliche Beweis nach mosaisch-talmudischem Rechte* (Berlin, 1846), pp. 5, 39, 54-55.

7. *ZRIJ*, I (1844): 9; *ZRIJ*, II (1845): 178.

8. *Der Orient*, (1842): 63-64; *Literaturblatt des Orients*, (1842), cols. 358-366; *ZRIJ*, I (1844): 227; *ZRIJ*, II (1845): 17. See also Rivka Horwitz, “The Idea of Jewish Independence in the Land of Israel of R. Zechariah Frankel in 1842” (Hebrew), *Kivvunim*, no. 6, (Feb. 1980): 5-25.

experience. Moreover, Frankel scorned efforts to mute and transcend the concreteness of the *halakhic* mode through excessive symbolic interpretation. Philo, *kabbalah*, and Samson Raphael Hirsch were all equally guilty of devaluing the individual *mizvah* by dwelling on its symbolic import.⁹

Yet it is quite apparent that Frankel never politicized classical Rabbinism, for which he spoke, by denying its inherent responsiveness to the dictates of the age. Utilizing creative biblical exegesis, the Rabbis were able to preserve an inner dynamic that ensured legal growth and flexibility.¹⁰ Rigidity set in only when increasing dispersion necessitated recording and codifying the Oral Law and thereby curbing the freedom of opinion which marked the mishnaic and talmudic stages of development.¹¹ To regain that legal vitality was the challenge of the age. Frankel's work gives ample evidence of a personal willingness to alter specific practices. He was prepared to allow autopsies under certain conditions, to delay burial, to modernize the procedure for circumcision, to introduce a program of religious education for girls, to make changes in the prayerbook, and even to study the possibility of dropping the second day of the three pilgrimage festivals (*yom tov sheni*).¹² In sum, he advocated what he called "moderate reform" or a "thinking faith" and never opposed *halakhic* change in principle.¹³

Furthermore, Frankel never regarded *halakhah* as exhausting the realm of the sacred in Judaism. If *halakhah* was one source of sanctity, history was most assuredly another, and it is this non-*halakhic* dimension of Judaism that is designated by the term "historical" in Frankel's classic phrase. The occasion for Frankel's resounding withdrawal from Frankfurt was not a *halakhic* dispute. The overwhelming majority, including Frankel, had agreed that there were no *halakhic* impediments to dropping Hebrew as the language of public prayer, but, unlike a much smaller majority, Frankel did feel that the weight of history dictated retaining Hebrew on objective grounds and not for merely sentimental reasons.¹⁴ Three years earlier, in 1842, in the controversy over the revised Hamburg prayerbook, he had protested against substituting Sefardic for Ashkenazic *piyyutim*, because the switch offended the historical consciousness of German Jewry.¹⁵ Ancient custom, nourished by continuous practice and often sanctified by martyrdom, constituted a commanding voice. The past was a source of values, inspiration, and commitment. Though a secular category, history obligated no less than did *halakhah*, and both stood athwart the revolutionary and levelling path of reason.

9. *ZRIJ*, I (1844): 94-95; *MGWJ*, I (1852): 245, 535; *MGWJ*, II (1853): 62-64; *MGWJ*, XVI (1867): 241-252, 281-297; *AZJ*, (1861), Beilage zu no. 8: 3.

10. *Der gerichtliche Beweis*, pp. 37-62.

11. *ZRIJ*, II (1845): 179-180.

12. *ZRIJ*, II (1845): 16, 265 ff.; *MGWJ*, I (1852), p. 426; *MGWJ*, VI (1857): 13-14.

13. *ZRIJ*, I (1844): 14, 27.

14. *Protokolle*, pp. 18-54.

15. *Literaturblatt des Orients*, 1842, col. 381.

To mediate the commands of *halakhah* and history, Frankel introduced the novel idea of the *Volk* as a formative agent in defining Jewish practice. Both the intent and source of this concept were manifestly conservative. If the Reformers sought to relieve the growing alienation from Judaism of educated and upwardly mobile Jews, Frankel spoke for the rural masses inside and outside Germany who were less affected by the fact or promise of emancipation. The elaborate rituals of Jewish life were not just partitions erected to shelter Jews in hostile climes; for countless Jews they remained the vital means for experiencing the divine. Rabbinic Jacobins could not unilaterally overthrow the realm of the sacred as long as it still enjoyed the benefit of popular support. The ultimate arbiter of the holy was the *Volk* itself. As long as it still possessed a vibrant religious consciousness, it represented a source of indirect revelation. Its piety exercised a legitimate veto over religious schemes imposed by a self-selected, rationalist elite.¹⁶

Frankel's emphasis on the people as a central component of the legal process was an idea dapted from Friedrich Carl von Savigny, who inaugurated the historical study of jurisprudence in Germany in 1814. In the wake of the French collapse, Savigny rejected the intoxicating proposal of fostering German unification through a single law code that would terminate the jungle of legal diversity which epitomized and reinforced the prevailing political fragmentation. Such a rationalistic effort could only do violence to the organically developed legal traditions and institutions of a given society. The *Volk* constituted the historical source of a society's legal system. Law, like language, was the spontaneous, unwritten, progressive emanation of a people's innermost spirit. With a brilliant Kantian twist, von Savigny implied that law was a form of self-legislation, and not a set of arbitrary constraints imposed from without. Only jurists and statesmen rooted in the midst of their people could give genuine expression to the collective will. Good legislation was little more than custom codified, while systematic codification usually signified social disintegration. In short, the key to jurisprudence lay in the study of history, which alone could identify the authentic components of a legal tradition.¹⁷

Given the centrality of rabbinic leadership in the traditional self-conception of *halakhah*, Frankel could hardly assign to the *Volk* the same dominant role in the genesis of law as did Savigny, though he did concede it a minor one. However, as early as 1841, he acknowledged that some Jewish practices had sprouted from popular soil.

An institution may also have become normative without benefit of higher authority, arising from ordinary life, from that which the piety of the people

16. *ZRIJ*, I (1844): 19-21, 292; *ZRIJ*, II (1845): 15-16, 180.

17. Friedrich Carl von Savigny, *Vom Beruf unsrer Zeit für Gesetzgebung und Rechtswissenschaft*, 2nd ed. (Heidelberg, 1828), pp. 8-15; *idem*, "Über den Zweck dieser Zeitschrift," *Zeitschrift für geschichtliche Rechtswissenschaft*, I (1815): 4; *idem*, *System des heutigen Römischen Rechts*, 3 vols. (Berlin, 1840), I, pp. 14-50.

had elevated as a guiding principle. And once it struck root, it gained permanence.¹⁸

But, essentially, Frankel was interested in underscoring the role of the *Volk* at the other end of the process: in maintaining the legal system. Living institutions could not be uprooted by fiat. The appeal for respect of public sentiment was raised to curb the freedom of rabbinic initiative. Only a duly elected synod of communal representatives could legitimately approximate the will of the people.¹⁹

Despite the immediate conservative benefit of this line of argumentation, Frankel was not unconscious of its liberal implications. Practices and institutions no longer firmly planted in the life of the community were destined to fade into oblivion. Frankel alluded to the example of R. Yehudah Nesia who, in the third century, had terminated the ancient prohibition against using gentile oil because it had apparently failed to gain widespread acceptance.²⁰ Frankel admitted that if, someday, Jews would cease to regard covering the head and praying in Hebrew as instruments of the sacred, he would be ready to abandon these practices formally.²¹

But Frankel had no intention of waiting until indifference became normative. The *Volk* is susceptible to influence through instruction and example. Its religious consciousness can be raised.²² If the final verdict lies with the jury, the rabbis still play the role of advocates. Thus, the direction that Judaism eventually takes is the outcome of a dialectical relationship between rabbinic leadership and the community. The need of the hour was not drastic reform but edifying instruction. Judaism stood in desperate need of intellectual rehabilitation. It had been the victim of a "bad press" for so long that uninformed, assimilating Jews were stripped of all self-confidence and self-respect. Frankel could not forgive the Reformers for internalizing that gentile critique of Judaism and seeking to rebuild it along alien lines.

For this reason, he never restricted his scholarly journal, begun in the fall of 1851, to pure *Wissenschaft*. At first glance, the title, *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums*, conveys a certain redundancy, as if *Geschichte* and *Wissenschaft* were utterly unrelated rather than largely overlapping fields of inquiry. But, as carried out in the pages of the *Monatsschrift*, the distinction proved to be quite apparent, though in terms of tone and method rather than in subject matter. Frankel intended to address two distinct, and often antagonistic, audiences through the same medium. While the section of *Geschichte* was pitched towards an educated

18. Z. Frankel, *Vorstudien zu der Septuaginta* (Leipzig, 1841), p. xiii.

19. *ZRIJ*, II (1845): 181.

20. *ZRIJ*, I (1844): 21.

21. Z. Frankel, "Über das Wesentliche der Function und Qualification des Rabbiners . . .," The Central Archives for the Jewish People, Jerusalem, P17/991.

22. *ZRIJ*, I (1844): 24.

but non-scholarly body of readers and contained translations of sources and synthetic essays that were meant to edify and uplift, the section of *Wissenschaft* disseminated the tentative results of basic research to the scholarly community. In December, 1851, Frankel gently chided Steinschneider in a letter for sending him a historical piece primarily of antiquarian interest and abounding in footnotes. He besought Steinschneider, who had published extensively in Frankel's short-lived journal of the mid-1840s, to remember

that the historical part, as I said at the beginning of the first issue, is intended actually more for the educated rather than the scholarly reader, and you know how much the unscholarly reader is frightened by scholarly notes. Consider still further that "men of understanding lack bread" and if I wanted to put out my journal only for scholars, it would barely count a hundred subscribers.²³

It was, therefore, no accident that the first eight volumes of the *Monatsschrift* contained twelve biographical essays about early Rabbinic sages, all printed in the section set aside for *Geschichte*. Not specimens of critical scholarship but rather of heroic history, these essays were clearly meant to restore respect for a much maligned elite. The function of biography, Frankel contended, should be to capture the spirit of a man and the character of his work. To restrict the canvas to recording the external facts was lifeless pedantry.²⁴

In general, it was hoped that empathetic history would engender reconciliation, loyalty, and even love. With the past as one source of the sacred in Judaism, certainly the study of Jewish history could serve to revitalize the sacred. The historian had to be steeped in the life of his people to penetrate to the deepest layers of connective tissue linking its experience, creativity, and character. The innermost sources of national strength were spiritual and eluded the grasp of non-Jewish observers.²⁵ In Heinrich Graetz, Frankel found his high priest.

The terms *Geschichte* and *Wissenschaft* in the *Monatsschrift*, however, have still other connotations. Frankel did not apply them only to contrasting popular and critical genres of scholarship. On occasion, it appears as if *Geschichte* was restricted to the external history of the Jews, the unedifying tale of Jewish persecution and passivity, whereas *Wissenschaft des Judentums* was meant to designate the internal realm of cultural and spiritual creativity. Frankel readily concurred with the widely held conviction that the Jews had no history in the conventional sense of the word. External

23. *MGWJ*, I (1852): 3, 246, 526. The Frankel letter to Steinschneider, dated December 26, 1851, in the archives of The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Steinschneider collection, probably marks the final break between these two men of fundamentally conflicting views on *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. The biblical quotation, which is in Hebrew in the original, comes from Eccl. 9:11, though Frankel, obviously quoting from memory, mixed up *Hahamim* and *Nevonim*.

24. *MGWJ*, IV (1855): 74.

25. *MGWJ*, IX (1860): 125.

history written on the basis of non-Jewish sources amounted to little more than a history of gentile animosity. The meaning and secret of Jewish existence inhered in how Jews lived and what they wrote, rather than what was done to them. Genuine *Wissenschaft* concerned itself with the realm of cultural history which revealed the vigor, originality, and resilience of the Jewish spirit.²⁶

More precisely still, Frankel regarded the study of Rabbinitics as the core of Jewish intellectualism. Since law expressed the essential character of Jewish piety, it followed that the study of the law constituted the authentic form of Jewish scholarship. *Wissenschaft* had never been alien to classical Rabbinitism. As a unique mode of religious worship, talmudic study infused the external forms of Judaism with vitality and flexibility and kept rigidity at bay. Learning sustained piety, growth, and responsiveness. In an age of exploding historical consciousness that threatened to submerge the religious core of Jewish culture, Frankel defended the unpopular idea that authentically Jewish *Wissenschaft* still consisted of the undistracted study of Rabbinic texts. By appropriating the vaunted term *Wissenschaft des Judentums* for traditional Jewish learning, Frankel not only deepened his notion of positivity, but minimized the discontinuity of the entire modern experience. The identification tended to mute the methodological break while retaining the order of priorities.²⁷

In Breslau, Frankel created the ambience to realize his priorities. He had long doubted whether the German university with its Christian ethos, its contempt for post-biblical Judaism, and its own priorities could serve as the institution to train the modern rabbi. Within the confines of his seminary, Frankel stressed the importance of personal observance, devoted more than half of the curriculum to a broad and systematic study of Rabbinic literature, and tried to counteract the lure of the doctorate, though the curriculum definitely allotted time for university attendance. Perhaps most interesting is the fact that, in his own teaching, Frankel shied away from introducing modern critical tools, preferring that students first master the material in the traditional manner. Responsible critical scholarship required a high degree of prior textual competence.²⁸

The study of Rabbinic literature absorbed Frankel's personal attention during a lifetime of unflagging research. In the process, he laid down the foundation for a new discipline. Profoundly influenced by the work of Savigny and his school of historical jurisprudence, Frankel conceived of, and created, the historical study of *halakhah*, or as Savigny's famous journal called the method, *geschichtliche Rechtswissenschaft*. The point of

26. *MGWJ*, I (1852): 5, 203-205, 243-244, 483-499, 523-524. See also *ZRIJ*, III (1846): pp. 214-215, 382-383.

27. *MGWJ*, I (1852): 207, 421-422, 443-445.

28. Frankel, "Über das Wesentliche der Function und Qualification des Rabbiners . . .," *MGWJ*, II (1853): 13-22; Brann, Beilage I; M.S. Zuckerman, *Mein Lebenslauf*, reprint (n.p. 1915?), pp. vi, xvii-xviii.

departure for both men was eminently practical. The organic principles which generate and inform a legal system could be recovered only chronologically, by tracing concepts and institutions back to their origins. Without knowledge of these principles and the identification of those contemporary institutions which still embody them, all legal reform would be premature. The course for the future had to be set by the nature of the past. When Frankel berated his adversaries for lacking such historically grounded principles, he could easily have invoked the clever allegory put forth by Savigny in 1814 against the French-inspired dream of a German code.

Because the Jewish people at Mount Sinai could not wait for the divine law, they impatiently made a golden calf, and thereby the true tablets of the law were smashed.²⁹

The genesis of Frankel's scholarly agenda goes back to his first years in Dresden. As early as December 1836, shortly after coming to the Saxon capital, he wrote a letter to Leopold Zunz joyfully noting his ambition to reconstruct the emergence of talmudic literature by identifying the influences of time and place and characterizing the distinctive contribution of each sage. The results, he believed, would lead to the purification of contemporary Judaism. By March 1838, he had begun to conceptualize what, twenty-one years later, would appear as *Darkhei ha-Mishnah*, and, in 1841, he announced and described publicly his vision of "a developmental history of *halakhah*" which would demonstrate how the individual components of the system emerged, proliferated, and interacted. Like Savigny, Frankel began by returning to the earliest and most obscure strata of the system.³⁰

In brief, Frankel set out to introduce the concept of time into the study of *halakhah*, thus paralleling Zunz's brilliant work on the evolution of *midrashic* literature. Toward that revolutionary end he claimed the right of free inquiry, used both Jewish and non-Jewish Greek sources, carefully ordered his material, and wrote extensively on many of the stages and literary deposits of *halakhic* history. The results of this prodigious effort may have seemed timid and inconsistent to Geiger, who dismissed Frankel's *Darkhei ha-Mishnah* as the work of a deeply ambivalent scholar, half critical and half Orthodox, but there is no gainsaying the radical secularization inherent in the enterprise.³¹ Despite his deep personal piety and his profound reverence for the subject matter, Frankel had transformed the *halakhic* system into the product of human hands. Unlike Krochmal, however, Frankel provided no theological superstructure to offset the implications of the developmental approach. The quo-

29. Savigny, *Vom Beruf unsrer Zeit*, p. 134.

30. The Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem, 4792/G12; Frankel, *Vorstudien*, p. xii.

31. Geiger letter to M. Steinschneider dated April 17, 1861, The Jewish Theological Seminary of America archives, Steinschneider collection.

tient of divinity in the *halakhic* system had been sharply and unambiguously reduced.

It was precisely this threatening consequence which prompted the bitter frontal assault of Hirsch and his circle on Frankel in 1861, two years after the publication of *Darkhei ha-Mishnah*.³² The fluid lines of a blurred religious spectrum had finally hardened. Though Frankel had begun his public career some two decades earlier by defending traditional Judaism against the left, he now faced a determined attack from the right. As the differences between left and center dissolved with the decline of radical Reform, the disagreements between right and center deepened. The roots of the controversy go back to the 1840s when Frankel refused to sign the resounding Orthodox condemnation of the first rabbinical conference.³³ A decade later, at the opening of the Breslau seminary, Frankel judiciously ignored a public inquiry from Frankfurt that sought to establish the seminary's position on revelation, Scripture, tradition, and custom.³⁴ Within two years Hirsch informed German Jewry of his contempt for the brand of scholarship practiced at Breslau with a blistering review of Graetz's history of the talmudic period, though the attack was primarily restricted to challenging the results of his research.³⁵

Frankel's pioneering reconstruction of the early stages of *halakhic* evolution raised the controversy to the level of principle. Hirsch's circle correctly perceived and denounced the implication that the historical method had recast the Rabbis from transmitters of the *halakhic* system into its progenitors. To abandon the tradition's dogmatic version of its divine origins implied unmistakably that what men had created men could change.³⁶ Frankel's book, it was said, deserved to be titled *Darkhei ha-meshaneh*, the ways of the changer.³⁷ Hirsch, at least, had the benefit of consistency. On principle, he repudiated the legitimacy of free critical inquiry, substituting a mode of intuitive exegesis that Frankel considered a reversion to Alexandrian allegory. For Hirsch, statements of historical fact preserved in Rabbinic literature were pronouncements of dogmatic truth beyond critical examination.³⁸ Judaism and modern *Wissenschaft* faced each other as irreconcilable antagonists.

To the chagrin of Rapoport, who wrote in his defense, Frankel adamantly refused to deliver the dogmatic confession which Hirsch demanded.³⁹ In one elliptic public declaration, Frankel reasserted that his

32. *Jeschurun*, VII (1860-1861): *passim*; L. Dobschütz, *Zacharias Frankel. Gedenkbücher* . . . , ed. by M. Brann (Breslau, 1901), pp. 80-86.

33. *Der treue Zions-Wächter*, (1846): 249-250; *Ibid.* (1847): 81-83.

34. *AZJ* (1854): 245.

35. *Jeschurun*, II (1855-1856) and III (1856-1857): *passim*.

36. *Jeschurun*, VII (1860-1861): 252-269, 364-368; Zvi Benjamin Auerbach, *Ha-Zofeh al Darkhei ha-Mishnah* (Frankfurt a.M., 1861).

37. *Jeschurun*, VII (1860-1861): 252.

38. *Jeschurun*, VII (1860-1861): 441-442.

39. Solomon Yehudah Rapoport, *Divrei Shalom ve-emet* (Prague, 1861), pp. 29-30; *Kirjath Sefer*, IV (1927-1928): 169.

work, which pulsed with love and loyalty, had critically demonstrated the antiquity of the *halakhic* system.⁴⁰ But that response was neither perfunctory nor peripheral. On the contrary, it pointed to the ultimate source of commitment in Frankel's conception of Judaism: Jewish history itself. With remarkable accuracy, that conception, as it gained adherents across Germany, became known as historical Judaism. The name embodied the essence of Frankel's accomplishment: harnessing the power of Jewish history for the preservation of Judaism. In large measure, antiquity had become a surrogate for divinity. Though more intuitive and less systematic, the program stands comparison with the historic reconciliation of Judaism and philosophy that was begun in tenth-century Baghdad.

Frankel boldly proposed to ground loyalty to Judaism in the very force which challenged its integrity: historical consciousness. His program offered a distinct alternative to both left and right. Whereas radical Reform cavalierly used history to legitimate its course of action and Hirsch continued to obligate through the dogma of a single act of exhaustive revelation, Frankel transmuted history into a conserving force, a generator of commitment. The intent was no longer to revamp Judaism by abandoning the past but to deepen Jewish consciousness by absorbing it. Studied with compassion and understanding, Jewish history could provide a source of inspiration, meaning, and renewal. The past was seen as the arena in which the collective will of Israel became manifest. Much of Judaism that was neither divine nor perfect had been rendered sacred by history, and the verdict of history obligated no less than the voice of revelation. Freed from the shackles of dogmatic history on the one hand and the pressure to subordinate the past to the present on the other, the Breslau school was able to achieve a creative symbiosis between traditional piety and modern scholarship.

40. *MGWJ*, X (1861): 159-160.

Judaism as an Art

ALLAN LAZAROFF

PHILOSOPHERS AND THEOLOGIANS HAVE occasionally called attention to the close relationship between art and religion. Medieval theologians, such as al-Ghazali in Islam and Judah Halevi in Judaism, used the artistic experience as a paradigm for the religious experience,¹ while nineteenth-century Christian philosophers, idealists such as Hegel and existentialists such as Kierkegaard, compared and contrasted the stages of art (or aesthetics) and religion.²

Today, the similarities between religion and art are especially important as an introduction to the world of religion. There may be many who appreciate one or more of the fine arts and who yet find religion a strange and inexplicable phenomenon, like a foreign language. For them, the similarities between art and religion can serve to translate the unknown world of religion into the more familiar terms of the world of art.

The analogies between religion and art are particularly striking in the case of Judaism, though it is important to emphasize at the outset that Judaism and religion, in general, differ essentially from art and should not be reduced to art because of these significant differences. There are, indeed, similarities, but there are also differences. I am speaking here only of analogies between Judaism and art.

Let us begin with the artistic process. Art involves a special way of looking at the world. The artist sees a dimension that is not immediately apparent to the rest of us and expresses it and records it in some medium such as words, colors, stone, or musical notes. Through the artist's imaginative perception and its aesthetic expression, we, too, sense this aesthetic dimension.

There are, however, some who may not see what the artist sees or hear what he hears. They may be tone-deaf, or simply may not respond to music or art. If then, everyone does not respond to, or agree upon, the

1. *Al-Ghazali's Mishkat al-Anwar* (The Niche for Lights), trans. W.H.T. Gairdner (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1924), p. 83; Judah Halevi, *The Kuzari: An Argument for the Faith of Israel*, trans. Hartwig Hirschfeld (1905; reprint, New York: Schocken Books, 1964), Sec. 5, ¶ 16, p. 274.

2. *Hegel's Philosophy of Mind: Being Part Three of the "Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences" (1830)*, trans. William Wallace, together with *The "Zusätze" in Boumann's Text (1845)*, trans. A.V. Miller (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), pars. 553-71, pp. 292-302; *Kierkegaard's Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, trans. David F. Swenson and Walter Lowrie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1941), pp. 347-53, 386-410, 507.

aesthetically pleasing as they agree upon scientific facts, do we conclude that art and aesthetics involve only subjective feelings, only states of consciousness? Is beauty only in the eye of the beholder? I think not. Most of us probably feel that, in spite of the lack of agreement, works of art have some objective dimension, whatever it is, that makes them aesthetically pleasing. There is, indeed, an aspect of the world out there that initiates our aesthetic experience. We account for the lack of agreement in aesthetics by adding that perceiving this aesthetic dimension requires a sensitivity in the beholder. The appreciation of art demands a certain taste that, while natural to some degree, must also be acquired and developed. The aesthetic experience is both objective and subjective, a combination of a dimension of the world with a receptivity for it in the perceiver.

Like art, religion involves a way of looking at the world. As the artist does in the aesthetic process, so the religious person senses a dimension of the world that others may not be aware of. Just as some people may sleep through a concert or worry about the stock market while in an art museum, so others may remain unmoved and fail to respond to what the religious perceive as a religious experience.³ And, as in the case of art, I do not believe we should say that, because of this disagreement, religion is only subjective, only a psychological state. Like the aesthetic dimension, the religious dimension is objectively there in the world. Like art, too, it requires a certain sensitivity, a certain taste in the beholder in order to perceive it. It is both objective and subjective at the same time.

In aesthetics, as we noted, this sensitivity springs from a natural talent as well as from training and discipline. Both are necessary and one alone will prove insufficient. On the one hand, as important as training is, no amount of study and training can totally take the place of talent. We may study meter in poetry and form in art, and these may go a long way toward improving our sensitivity, but our appreciation and work will be deficient if natural talent is absent. Someone with no training at all may come along and do much better because of native ability. On the other hand, this native ability also requires a process of education for its full development.

In a similar manner, religious sensitivity is a native ability that also requires training for its full development. Both are necessary, for, as important as is religious training, it may be futile in the total absence of any natural religious sensitivity. Thus, some who are raised in, and exposed to, a religious environment may not develop religiously because of an absence of native religious sensitivity. Conversely, religiously sensitive people may seek out a religious environment and respond to the religious dimension even without any formal religious training.

In aesthetics, someone who is insensitive to art and lacks taste might simply decide to do without the aesthetic dimension of life and may, indeed, be quite happy without it. We may argue that the quality of his life

3. Cf. Samuel Alexander, *Space, Time and Deity* (London: Macmillan, 1920), Vol. II, pp. 374-378.

is suffering because of a lack of aesthetics, but I do not think we would claim that this person is obligated or duty-bound, in something like a moral sense, to involve himself in the arts and aesthetic experience. It would, after all, seem unjust to obligate the aesthetically insensitive person to do something that he is constitutionally incapable of doing. Similarly, someone who is religiously insensitive may simply do without the religious dimension of life and perhaps be quite happy. Judaism, however, would not just claim that the quality of a person's life is deficient because of a lack of religion. Judaism obligates him, as it does every Jew, to participate fully in Jewish life, whether he be sensitive or not. But, as in the case of art, so here, too, is it not unjust to obligate the religiously insensitive person to do something that he is constitutionally incapable of doing?

One solution would be to argue that every Jew has a minimal degree of religious sensitivity. This may very well be what the great medieval Hebrew poet and philosopher, Judah Halevi, had in mind when he said that every Jew, by birth, automatically possesses inwardly a "divine thing." I interpret this divine thing as religious sensitivity. Being a physician as well, Halevi indicated that this divine thing, like a recessive gene, may be hidden and dormant in some individuals in some generations.⁴ This would account for those Jews who seem religiously insensitive. In spite of this dormancy, however, the sensitivity, like a genetic characteristic, is passed on from generation to generation. Because of it, Judaism is justified in obligating all Jews to participate in Jewish life, and no Jew can withdraw from the faith by claiming religious insensitivity.

We have seen that aesthetic sensitivity requires both natural sensitivity and training for its full development, but what kind of training is it that nourishes this sensitivity and causes it to flourish? Is it based on books, lectures and homework? Clearly, the training is composed of practice and experience as well as theory and study. One could not learn about music without listening to it, nor could one learn to play a piano without practicing. It would be impossible to learn about painting by only reading or talking about it, or to understand poetry by reading and hearing only prosaic descriptions of it. In art and aesthetics one does not first prepare and understand and then appreciate and do. The experience and practice are part of the process of development and cannot be separated from the process as its goal.

So, in Judaism, the development of religious sensitivity involves experience and performance as well as study. We may discuss the Sabbath and holidays, but some understanding of them must include experiencing their observance. This seems to be the intent of the first half of Ps. 34:9, "*Ta'amu u-re'u ki tov ha-Shem.*" This is usually translated, "Consider and

4. *The Kuzari* Sec. 1. ¶s 27, 42, 95; Sec. 2. ¶s 14, 44, 55-56. See also Isaak Heinemann's "Introduction" to his abridged edition of the *Kuzari*, reprinted in *Three Jewish Philosophers* (New York: Meridian, 1960), pp. 14-15. Heinemann calls attention to the analogy between Judaism and art on pp. 19 and 130.

see that God is good," for the Hebrew noun, *ta'am*, means "a reason." The word, *ta'am*, however, also means "taste," "try," or "experience," and if we translate the other verb, *re'u*, as "understand," instead of "see," we end up with the almost blasphemous translation, "Taste and understand that God is good." Instead of blasphemy, however, the verse simply states our contention that experience leads to understanding.⁵

Here, then is a rationale for the commandments (*mizvot*). Certain actions are commanded because, among other things, their performance leads us to an awareness of the religious dimension; they form a path to the knowledge of God.⁶ These deeds, like experience, lead to understanding and are not only the result of understanding. This is what the people of Israel meant at Mount Sinai when they said, "*Na'aseh ve-nishma*" (Exod. 24:7). This is usually translated as "we will do and obey," but in that case we might have expected the order of the words to be reversed, with the doing following the obeying. If, however, we translate *nishma* as "understand," a possible meaning, the verse will read, "We will do and understand." The people of Israel responded, then, as we have been arguing, that Jewish religious understanding comes through doing.⁷

Experiencing and doing, of course, need not necessarily lead to religious understanding, just as exposure to the arts need not necessarily lead to an appreciation of them. One may try to experience, one may be exposed and, yet, either because of an absence of natural sensitivity or for other reasons, one may not reach or appreciate. But the experience, activity, and exposure, while perhaps not sufficient causes, are yet requisite causes of religious understanding. They form part of the necessary subject matter of religious reflection and without them religious understanding would be deficient.⁸ On the other hand, while we have stressed that action should precede understanding, action is obviously also an expression of religious awareness and may come after it as well. The

5. In *The Kuzari* Sec. 4. ¶ 17, Judah Halevi associates an Arabic word for taste, *dhawq*, with the Hebrew word *ta'am* of Ps. 34:9. In Sec. 4. ¶ 16, *dhawq* describes how the God of Abraham is known, as opposed to the God of Aristotle, who is known by reason (*qiyas*). See Hartwig Hirschfeld, ed., *Das Buch al-Chazari des Abu-l-Hasan Jehuda Hallewi*, original Arabic text with the Hebrew translation of Judah ibn Tibbon (Leipzig, 1887; reprint, Jerusalem: n.p., 1970), pp. 260–61. The great Muslim mystic and theologian, al-Ghazali, had used this word, *dhawq*, to describe immediate religious experience. See William Montgomery Watt, *The Faith and Practice of al-Ghazali* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1953), p. 55 (from the autobiographical "Deliverance from Error").

6. Abraham J. Heschel, *God in Search of Man: A Philosophy of Judaism* (New York: Meridian, 1959), p. 31.

7. Cf. B.T. *Shabbat* 88a and Heschel, *Op. cit.*, pp. 281–82.

8. Substituting Christian belief for action, St. Augustine and St. Anselm assert in a similar manner that faith is a necessary condition for understanding religion, just as experiencing this world is a necessary condition for understanding it. St. Anselm, for example, says at the end of the first chapter of his *Proslogion*: "For I do not seek to understand so that I may believe; but I believe so that I may understand. For I believe this also, that 'unless I believe, I shall not understand.'" (Trans. Maxwell J. Charlesworth [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965], p. 115.) See Alfred Weber, *History of Philosophy*, trans. Frank Thilly (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925), pp. 165–66 on St. Anselm and p. 145 on St. Augustine.

relationship between action and understanding is reciprocal, each reinforcing the other.

To continue our analogy, we recall that the artist expresses his perception of the aesthetic dimension through the various arts, music, literature, and so forth. The arts may also be the means of religious expression,⁹ but a more distinctive form of religious expression, indeed, perhaps the uniquely religious response to the religious dimension of the world, is ritual. We might call ritual the poetry of religion.

Now, ritual may seem a poor means of expression because of its constancy and rigid structure. Yet the structure of ritual corresponds to what we call style in art. Style, a mode of imaginative beholding, forms part of the means available to the artist for expression. Style may vary more than basic ritual does according to periods of time, geographical locales, and cultural groups as well as individuals. Still, style is governed by structure and laws and yet does not negate the freedom of the individual artist to create through it, and within it, and, perhaps, even to change it.¹⁰

Structure in ritual may be more rigid and constant than style in art, but it also provides the forms through which and within which the individual can express himself religiously. Like style in art, it does not negate the freedom of individual creativity, although it circumscribes it more. Within the broad prescriptions of religious regulations there is wide latitude for individual expression. The rabbis particularly urged what they called *hiddur mizvah*, the beautification and enhancement of a ritual act or object beyond the legal requirements. The *sukkah*, for example, the temporary booth built for the festival of Tabernacles, has to meet certain specifications, but one should also go beyond those specifications in order to decorate and embellish it. It was especially in the fixed format of prayer that the rabbis urged special individual intentions and petitions. They even went so far as to say that one whose prayer was only in the fixed format had not really prayed.¹¹ So the structure of prayer and other Jewish rituals is the style for individual religious creativity and expression.

We have all heard that rituals are symbolic, but what kind of symbolism is there in religion? Here, too, the symbolism of the ritual act and object is similar to the symbolism of the aesthetic object and the work of art. In both cases the symbolism, that is, the relationship of the ritual or work of art to its meaning or significance, differs from the symbolism of mathematical signs. In mathematics and logic, the relationship of the sign to its significance is external and arbitrary, and the two can easily be separated. If they are separated, it is the significance that is interesting, not the sign, for the sign is just a means of expressing the significance. If a

9. Since the eighteenth century, sublimity, a traditional aesthetic category, has been said to characterize artistic works used as a means of religious expression.

10. See Heinrich Wölfflin, *Principles of Art History: The Problem of the Development of Style in Later Art*, trans. M.D. Hottinger (New York: Dover Publications, 1950), pp. vii-viii.

11. Mishnah *Berakhot* 4.4, *Avot* 2.18.

different sign could be used to express the same idea, that second sign would be just as good as the first one. Similarly, in an essay of expository prose it is the ideas that must be conveyed, and a different set of words expressing the same ideas as clearly as the first set would do as well.

In aesthetics, on the other hand, the work of art and its significance form an organic unity that cannot be separated into two parts. The symbolism of the work of art is not arbitrary and external to its significance but, rather, internal and essential.¹² It is not that the meaning of the work alone is important and the work itself just a means of expressing the meaning, so that another means of expressing the same meaning might do as well. The work of art is so bound up with its meaning that there is no other way of expressing it. The meaning of a poem or a painting could not be expressed as well, for example, in prose.

In art, the particular work is as important as its meaning. Indeed, artists tell us that their works frequently seem to acquire a life of their own. An artist may start out with a concept of a work of art, but, as the work progresses it may, almost on its own, develop in a different and unforeseen direction, as though it were growing independently of the artist.

The work of art may also acquire many meanings quite different from those that the artist initially intended. Here is the opposite of the situation in mathematics and logic, where there may be one meaning and many arbitrary signs for it. In art, the symbol or work is one, the meanings for it many.¹³ Some of these meanings may be assigned to the work and may be as arbitrary and external to it as the mathematical sign is to its meaning. But at least some of the meanings of a work of art flow naturally from it and are organically bound up with it.

In the work of art, then, we have a combination of the particular and the universal. The universal is the meaning, the significance that is symbolized by the aesthetic object, the particular. In mathematics and logic, the universal meaning is the essential and the particular sign is dispensable. In aesthetics, however, the particular aesthetic object is as essential as the universal meaning because of their organic unity. The particular in art is not just a means to the universal; rather, it is as important as the universal.

In a similar manner, the symbolism of a ritual act or object is not arbitrary. The ritual symbol is not external to its meaning like the sign in mathematics and logic. The ritual is not just a dispensable means to a more important end, namely, the meaning that is essentially independent of the ritual. Rather, the ritual and its meaning form an organic unity that cannot be separated into parts. The ritual is so bound up with its meaning that this meaning cannot be expressed in any other way. Instead of being

12. See Albert Hofstadter, *Truth and Art* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), pp. 10, 182-83.

13. Cf. Henri Focillon, *The Life of Forms in Art*, trans. Charles B. Hogan and George Kubler, 2nd Eng. ed. enl. (New York: George Wittenborn, 1948), pp. 3-4.

one of many particulars that indicate a universal significance, the ritual is, rather, one particular that may have many meanings. Like a work of art, it is at least as important as its meaning and has a certain independence and life of its own. As it grows and develops, like a living organism, it continuously acquires and creates new meanings. It forms a combination of the particular and the universal in which both are necessary and important.

Thus, ritual acts such as the wearing of *tefillin* (phylacteries) during morning prayers, the waving of the *lulav* during the festival of Tabernacles, and the lighting of the Sabbath and Hanukkah candles can have many different meanings to different people. The recitation of the prayers in Hebrew can also have many meanings beyond the individual definitions of the words, even to those who may not understand Hebrew. The Hebrew words in these prayers, even if not understood, are integral to the ritual, just as all the parts of a work of visual art, a poem or a musical composition are essential to its organic unity. One may appreciate the ritual without fully understanding the words just as one might appreciate an opera in Italian without fully understanding the language.

These contrasting kinds of symbolism in art and religion on the one hand, and in mathematics and logic on the other, also form one of the distinctions between Jewish mysticism (*Kabbalah*) and philosophy. The rise of Jewish philosophy and *Kabbalah* in the Middle Ages can be seen as an attempt to provide Jewish law and practice with an official explanation or theology, with a theoretical and speculative foundation. A similarity between Jewish philosophy and *Kabbalah* is that both sought to become the meaning or significance symbolized by Jewish ritual and tradition. In the rationale of Jewish philosophy, however, the ritual symbol was like a mathematical sign. It was a dispensable means to a more important end, the universal philosophical meaning. Ritual was only an allegory for abstract Aristotelian concepts that could be grasped more firmly through philosophical investigations. *Kabbalah*, on the other hand, recognized that ritual was as important as the meaning with which it formed an organic unity. Ritual in Jewish mysticism was not just a means to an end. It was indispensable and symbolic of many cosmic meanings available only through ritual. In light of this distinction, it is small wonder that the Jewish populace at the end of the Middle Ages, sensing the independent importance of ritual, turned to *Kabbalah* instead of to philosophy as its official theology.¹⁴

A final similarity between Judaism and art is that both are responses to, and expressions of, the paradoxical and contradictory in the world. The combination of the particular and the universal and the possibility of many meanings allows the aesthetic object and the ritual to reflect inconsistent aspects of our lives. They are, both of them, a combination of the

14. Cf. Gershom G. Scholem, "Kabbalah and Myth," in his *On the Kabbalah and its Symbolism*, trans. R. Manheim (New York: Schocken, 1965), pp. 88-90, 94-100; idem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, 3rd rev. ed. (New York: Schocken, 1954), pp. 23-32, 35-36.

finite and the infinite, the immanent and the transcendent, the sensuous and the spiritual.¹⁵ In the signs of mathematics and logic, such combinations are anathema, but we recognize such paradoxical combinations in the reality of our lives. The popularity of art and religion derives, in part, from their ability to express this paradoxical aspect of our experience.

Judaism, we should add, illustrates the paradoxical combination of the particular and the universal not only in its ritual but, also, in its very essence as a religion. The God who is worshipped in Judaism is, on the one hand, the God of all humanity Who created the universe, but this same God also has a special relationship with a particular people, the Jews.

Finally, in our discussion of the analogies between Judaism and art, we have so far been using art and aesthetics interchangeably. Aesthetics, however, is really the study of what makes an object attractive, whether it be natural or human creation. Art, on the other hand, refers to the result of the human act of creating beauty, which may or may not be initiated by natural beauty. There are, in other words, the spectators, the critics, and the philosophers who appreciate and discuss beauty, and then there are the artists who create it. While the spectator in the aesthetic experience may participate emotionally and is not merely passive, the involvement stops short of action. It is the artist who acts. In Judaism, as we have seen, the ritual act and the object parallel the artistic act and the object, but in Judaism there is no simple appreciation as in aesthetics. Judaism expects every Jew to respond to the religious dimension through action. Judaism has no spectators. It demands that every Jew be an artist. The artist, however, ordinarily creates beauty that is decorative or imitative, an embellishment and reflection of our existent world. Judaism demands that every Jew be an artist who, within the style of Jewish tradition, creates not just decorative or imitative beauty but his very life.

15. Hofstadter, *Op. cit.*, p. 6.

Buber's Way to "I and Thou"

Review-Essay by MAURICE FRIEDMAN

Buber's Way to "I and Thou." An Historical Analysis and the First Publication of Martin Buber's Lectures "Religion als Gegenwart." Volume 7 of *Phronesis. Eine Schriftenreihe*. By RIVKA HORWITZ. Heidelberg. Verlag Lambert Schneider, 1978. 301 pp.

IN HIS AFTERWORD ON "THE HISTORY OF the Dialogical Principle" Martin Buber recounted that he was able to begin the final writing of his classic *I and Thou* "after he had set forth his train of thought in a course that he gave at the *Freie Jüdisches Lehrhaus* in Frankfurt founded and directed by his friend Franz Rosenzweig" (a statement which was inadvertently left out of this reviewer's translation of the Afterword for the Macmillan paperback edition of *Between Man and Man*). Rivka Horwitz has set these lectures on "Religion as Presence" at the center of her book on *Buber's Way to "I and Thou"* because the fourth, fifth, sixth, and eighth of them form an early version of segments of the first and third Parts of *I and Thou*. In so doing she has made an important contribution to Buber scholarship, though one largely restricted to those who know German, since her comments are in English but the lectures themselves are printed in the original German. She has also performed a service in illuminating the *dialogue* between Martin Buber, on the one hand, and the Austrian Catholic existentialist Ferdinand Ebner and the Jewish existentialist Franz Rosenzweig, on the other. However, her claims of the influence of Ebner and Rosenzweig on Buber's *I and Thou*, in contrast, are exaggerated and misleading.

"Religion as Presence" is a matter of "the narrow ridge between abysses," says Buber in the *Lehrhaus* lectures. The multiplicity and exclusivity of the religions, their decline into the world of It, of objects, is not a matter of human willfulness but of human tragedy. The history of religions, with its displacement of God into the world of It, and the torturing and murdering of one another that follows therefrom is closely bound to the way of history as a progressive distancing from, and returning to, God. Just as there is a metacosmic movement away from God and toward God, so the history of religions may be seen as the eternal struggle and settlement of the movements against each other and the binding to each other of God and religion.

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On the basis of her analysis of Buber's *Lehrhaus* lectures, Horwitz asserts that Ebner's "pneumatological fragments," *Das Wort und die geistigen Realitäten* ("The Word and the Spiritual Realities," 1921), had an important influence on Buber's way to *I and Thou*, an influence which Buber himself explicitly denied. Certainly, when Ebner speaks of belief in the name of God as belief in the addressed person, and when he says that the man who believes in the "Thou coming to meet him" no longer asks about the meaning of life, he is uncannily close to Buber. On the other hand, Horwitz is radically wrong when she says, "It has already become clear that on a cardinal point — the idea of God as the true Thou of the human I — Buber follows Ebner closely." As Buber himself wrote, "Ebner's basic idea is the solitary relationship of the human I to the Thou of God, mine that of the fundamental connection between it [man's relationship to God] and his relationship to the Thou of his fellowman." Nor does it follow that Buber's "sudden awareness that God must *always be addressed in the second person*, as the Confronted — as Thou" means, as Horwitz claims, that "The force and vitality of his future book and philosophy rests on the new name for God that he had discovered." What was new for Buber was not a name but the clarification of the I-Thou relationship as the source of all real living, and this, as I have shown in *The Road to I and Thou*¹, was the product of an organic development over twenty years to which Ebner's fragments might have come, at best, only as a clarifying period.

In her lecture at the Centenary Conference on Buber's Thought in Beer-Sheva, Israel, in 1978, Horwitz suggested that the *Lehrhaus* lectures show a temporary but highly significant influence of Ebner in the fact that the It-world is seen there as evil in the way that it is not in *I and Thou*. Her notion of a gnostic dualism present in the lectures is an almost total misreading. Although Ebner never uses the language of the It-world or I-It, he rejects the world, and, with it, mathematics and science in a way that Buber would never do. If, in *I and Thou*, Buber was to say that the will to profit and the will to be powerful are not evil in themselves but only as they become ends rather than means, in the *Lehrhaus* lectures, too, he repeated his earlier insistence that the world of orientation has a relative justification and a positive value. What Buber *did* say, in the Fifth Lecture, was that if we consider the two basic positions next to each other, "then we might certainly *at first (zunächst)* feel that the construction of an It-world means somehow a betrayal, a defection, a withdrawal from a task that is given to us to build up the world out of the Thou" (italics mine). He also spoke of a creation that has run away from God, of a "flight before the Thou," and of having "to live ever again the disappointment of becoming It." But it is not at all true, as Horwitz says, that "it remains highly doubtful

1. Maurice Friedman, *Martin Buber's Life and Work: Encounter on the Narrow Ridge* (to be published by Dutton in the Fall of 1981), Volume I.

whether there exists even the possibility of a relation between the Absolute Thou and the It-world." The dialectic which informed Buber's later understanding of the I-Thou and the I-It is present here, too.

The discontinuity of the moments of Thou is only an apparent one, Buber asserted in the Sixth Lecture, because of the Absolute Thou. In this same lecture he spoke of not allowing the world to become only an It-world, but to take it with one, "to use a Hasidic word to uplift it, that means to uplift it to its roots, to leave nothing outside, to affirm all, but all not as finite or infinite number of things or of events, but all in the All-Thou."

And again, not to step out of the individual Thou-relationships, not say to renounce them, as it were suppress them, but to let them all stream into the absolute relationship, into the relationship that does not arise out of their collection but also not out of separation from them, but out of their Becoming-All.²

Horwitz's book also includes other material from the Buber Archives at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, the most important of which is an outline in Buber's handwriting, dated February 5, 1918, entitled "The Confronted and the Between." The absence of explicitly dialogical terminology from the plan of 1918 does not mean, as Horwitz suggests, that "scholars who have sought the beginnings of *I and Thou* by searching for early dialogical expressions have followed a false trail." Though Buber found his finished terminology late, his thought developed organically and in response to events. Nor did "dialogue" ever mean to him, as it did to Rosenzweig and Ebner, just speech. Rosenzweig's possible role in the process whereby Buber shed the "realizing" language of his early book, *Daniel*, is not important, for that language was left over, like the cocoon from which the butterfly emerges, and was not an essential part of Buber's thought. The lectures on "Religion as Presence" are clearly beyond *Daniel* and close to *I and Thou* in what was really decisive for Buber — the breakthrough to the meeting with the other.

More important, as Horwitz recognizes, is the question of Buber's concept of dialogue. In the lectures, the Thou relation does not "involve any decisive element of speech, call or dialogue," Horwitz writes.

While one reference of man's speaking to nature exists, this thought is certainly not developed. *The dialogical basis of the I-Thou was, in fact, one of the very last additions to an already existing structure.* This fact goes far, I believe, in explaining a great deal of the problematics and inconsistencies present in the published version of *I and Thou*.³

She bases this assertion on the four cardinal examples which Buber

2. Rivka Horwitz, *Buber's Way to "I and Thou,"* pp. 24, 170–82. On pp. 166–70 Horwitz conclusively dismisses Trude Weiss-Rosmarin's claim that Buber was influenced by Hermann Cohen's *Religion of Reason out of the Sources of Judaism* (1919) with its concept of "correlation."

3. Horwitz, p. 214 ff.

presents in "Religion as Presence" in order to explain the Thou-relation: Man's relation to his beloved, to the tree (nature), to a work of art, and to a potential act upon which he decides. She cites uses of the word "realize" in the Lectures ("I do not have to experience the Thou that confronts me, but to realize it") and of the change in *I and Thou* to the language of speech ("When I stand in front of a human being as my Thou and speak the basic I-Thou to him"), and she claims that the four examples really belong to the philosophy of realization rather than that of *I and Thou*.

The examples have their source not in dialogical thinking, but in the philosophy expressed in *Daniel*. Three of the four do not lend themselves to real dialogue; one of them cannot even be adapted to dialogical thinking. They can be explained only in the framework of a concept of confrontation which does not include dialogue or speech.⁴

Horwitz suggests that Buber himself realized how inappropriate the I-Thou relationship in art was and, therefore, while retaining it in *I and Thou*, obscured it!

What is wrong with all this, aside from the fact that it is sheer speculation, is, first, that Horwitz is accepting Ebner's and Rosenzweig's use of "dialogue" as synonymous with speech as "classic" and on that basis treats Buber's use of dialogue as problematic. Dialogue does not just mean speech for Buber, as it does for Ebner and Rosenzweig, and art as dialogue, so far from being something Buber wished to obscure, recurs in all clarity in "Dialogue" (1928) and in *The Knowledge of Man* (1965). "Dialogue" already appeared in Buber's Preface to *Daniel* ("The Walking Stick") as a direct outgrowth of his relationship to nature (again a tree). Second, and equally important, it is not true that Buber was unconcerned with speech before *I and Thou* or that, as Horwitz claims, Rosenzweig clarifies "for Buber the central importance of language." My chapter on "The World as Word" in *The Road to "I and Thou"* is powerful and incontestable evidence to the contrary. It is true that speech has a much more central place in *I and Thou* than in "religion as Presence," and it is probably true that Buber's dialogue with Rosenzweig helped him bring into focus and integrate with his developing I-Thou philosophy the concern with speech that had been central to him, too, for a quarter of a century. Yet, in the finished form of *I and Thou* and in the philosophy of dialogue and the philosophical anthropology that developed from it, literal speech is always only *one* of the forms of dialogue and never simply synonymous with it. In "Man and His Image Work" (*The Knowledge of Man*) the longing for perfect relation expresses itself in four potencies: knowledge, love, art, and faith. Thus, more than thirty years after the publication of *I and Thou* in the most mature expression of his philosophical anthropology, something very akin to the four examples of the Lectures recurs, not as a leftover from the immature philosophy of realization of *Daniel* but as central and clearly thought through.

4. Ibid., p. 215.

Commenting on the correspondence between Franz Rosenzweig and Buber regarding the galleys of *I and Thou*, Rivka Horwitz quite rightly says that Rosenzweig's philosophy begins with "a leap of faith," a Biblical faith without which one cannot philosophize on Rosenzweig's basis. Buber, in contrast, places philosophical anthropology, and not theology, at the center of his philosophy. Horwitz is right in seeing *I and Thou* as "a response to the outcry of a generation suffocated by machines, institutions, sciences and information — a generation seeking real life." But she is wrong in maintaining that I-It does not and cannot lead to God. The It is the necessary material for the becoming of the Thou, and unless it is brought again and again into the Thou, there can be no Thou. She is still more radically wrong in asserting that "Buber's theory of I-It is in basic agreement with the Idealist's understanding of the world as dependent on human consciousness, and with his consequent denial of God's direct relation to nature." For Buber, God speaks His word to man in creation. Concrete nature in its immediacy is Thou, not It, and as Thou it is really other. The impact of that otherness is exactly what Buber means by *meeting*. The It is not nature; it is man's concepts and categories about nature. Rosenzweig's real It which can be spoken with the whole being is really Buber's I-Thou relationship with nature. The It which the Thou again and again becomes is not necessarily inauthentic or any block to God, as Horwitz imagines, but neither is it, as she imagines, anything substantive. It is our subjective-objective relation to the world through the eyes of knowledge, science, and utility.

Because Rosenzweig uses dialogue as speech he has no actual place for the I-Thou relationship with nature. Therefore, the It that he defends as prephilosophical is actually Buber's Thou with nature (the directly comprehended, related to, concrete unique), though seen theologically through the eyes of God (He-it) rather than of man. Rosenzweig starts with a theological presupposition that enables him to speak of God's relation to creation *as if from God's point of view*. Buber starts with the existentially given I-Thou relationship from which the I-It relation necessarily comes, because of the abstraction involved in our knowledge. Even where Buber later adopts Rosenzweig's triad of world-time as in "The Faith of Judaism" and "The Man of Today and the Jewish Bible," he does so not theologically but existentially, discovering creation, revelation, and redemption out of our own human experience and not from some *a priori* theological revelation.

Horwitz goes to extravagant lengths to try to establish Rosenzweig's influence upon Buber in the period *after* the publication of *Ich und Du*, such as her ascription of Buber's critique of Kierkegaard's denial of creation in "The Question to the Single One" (1936, not 1933 as she dates it) to the influence of Rosenzweig, or her seeing Buber's insistence on redemption as taking place "in the whole corporeal world," as being caused by Rosenzweig when it was, as I have repeatedly shown, one of his

earliest thoughts. Most absurd of all is her claim that “Rosenzweig’s thoughts found expression in Buber’s *Two Types of Faith*, a treatment of the difference between what he calls *pistis* and *emunah*. From the outset he employs Rosenzweig’s distinction between the Christian, as one who believes *in* something, and the Jew, who is himself the belief.” Buber’s distinction is, rather, between faith as a knowledge proposition and faith as unconditional trust and has nothing to do with the Jew himself being the belief. What is more, Buber could never accept Rosenzweig’s view of Christianity as a history religion and Judaism as simply living with the eternal outside of history. If anything, Buber saw Judaism as far more really historical than Christianity.⁵

What we may conclude from all this is that Horwitz has performed a service in illuminating the *dialogue* between Buber, on the one hand, and Ebner and Rosenzweig, on the other, but also that she has introduced a mechanistic and simplistic notion of “influence” that creates even more distortions than it clears up. She approaches Buber in too theological and Rosenzweigian a fashion to understand his thought in its own terms. Yet it is only this understanding that can give us an insight into the profound and two-sided dialogue that took place between Buber and Rosenzweig and between Buber and the writings of Ebner during the last stretch of Buber’s road to *I and Thou*.

5. Ibid., pp. 234–36, 238.

Abraham Joshua Heschel and the Divine-Human Encounter

Review-Essay by JOHN C. MERKLE

Abraham Joshua Heschel. By BYRON L. SHERWIN. (Makers of Contemporary Theology). Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1979. 53 pp. \$2.50 (paper).

Divine-Human Encounter: A Study of Abraham Joshua Heschel. By HAROLD KASIMOW. Foreword by Maurice Friedman. Washington, D.C.: Univeristy Press of America, 1979. x + 113. \$7.35.

SOON AFTER ABRAHAM HESCHEL'S DEATH IN 1972, Fritz Rothschild eulogized him as "the outstanding Jewish thinker of his generation."¹ More recently, Jacob Neusner called him "the most productive and by far the best theological mind in modern and contemporary Judaism."² Yet, despite such acclaim, Heschel's contribution to theology is still virtually unexplored. Two recent books attempt to remedy this situation. Byron Sherwin's *Abraham Joshua Heschel* is an introduction to Heschel which, because of its brevity, the author admits, "can only survey the surface, and not plumb the depths." Harold Kasimow's *Divine-Human Encounter: A Study of Abraham Joshua Heschel* does more than survey the surface; whether or not it plumbs the depths, it does explore the perplexities of Heschel's thought. Both books are welcome and have their place: one as a primer, the other as a scholarly study.

The inclusion of Sherwin's book in a series entitled "Makers of Contemporary Theology" may prompt more theologians to mine Heschel's works and allow him to have the influence on contemporary theology that he deserves. Although himself an "architect and herald of a new theology," as Rothschild called him, Heschel's impact on the theological world is unfortunately, not yet as great as that of the others in this series: Bonhoeffer, Buber, Bultmann, de Chardin, Heidegger, Kierkegaard, Marcel, Schleiermacher, Tillich, Whitehead and Wittgenstein. Contemporary theology would be immeasurably enriched if it were shaped more by the genius of Heschel.

1. Fritz A. Rothschild, "Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907-1972): Theologian and Scholar," *American Jewish Year Book* (1973), p. 533.

2. Jacob Neusner, "The Tasks of Theology in Judaism: A Humanistic Program," *The Journal of Religion* (January 1979): 78.

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Heschel was not only an eminent theologian but a prophetic person as well. Part I deals with his life, which Sherwin calls "a symphony of gracious deeds and sublime thoughts" (p. 1). Here we get a glimpse of a man of conscience, courage and wisdom.

The main portion of the book, part 2, deals with the thought. Sherwin begins by showing how Heschel's writings, though not explicitly autobiographical, are "windows to his soul" (p. 11) and how "Heschel felt obliged to dedicate himself to identifying the categories of thought by means of which religion in general, and Judaism in particular, may understand itself 'in terms of its own spirit'" (p. 12). Individual self-understanding and the self-understanding of the religious tradition are goals of Heschel's "depth-theology." Particularly helpful is Sherwin's discussion of the fundamental principle of polarity in Heschel's thought, e.g., polarity between faith and creed, depth-theology and theology, event and idea, mysticism and philosophy. There are also sections on God, man, revelation and the human response to revelation as expressed by faith, deeds and prayer. Neglected in this chapter, as in the whole book, is a treatment of Heschel's theology of God's pathos. This is especially regrettable since the book is intended as an introduction to the essentials of Heschel's theology and as a plea for the recognition of his contribution to contemporary religious thought. Nothing is more essential to Heschel's theology than his doctrine of pathos which is his major theological contribution. It is in this theology of pathos that, as Rothschild rightly claims, "Heschel has propounded a truly revolutionary doctrine, challenging the whole venerable tradition of Jewish and Christian metaphysical theology from Philo, Maimonides and Thomas Aquinas to Herman Cohen, Étienne Gilson and Paul Tillich."³ Even in a book as small as Sherwin's (and all the books in this series are small) something on the doctrine of pathos should have been included, even if it meant deleting some paragraphs on other topics.

The third and final part of the book focuses on Heschel's significance for both Christians and Jews. Sherwin maintains that "Heschel made Christians aware of how alive and vital are the faith of Israel and the people of Israel" (p. 44); that he helped Christians realize that "only a conscious commitment to the roots of Christianity in Judaism . . . can save Christianity from self-distortion, from inauthenticity" (p. 45); and that he showed why "respect rather than contempt, appreciation rather than repudiation, co-existence rather than supersession, ought to dominate Christian thinking about Jews and Judaism" (p. 45).

Concerning his significance for Jews, Sherwin claims: "While Heschel advocated Christian commitment to the integrity of Jewish faith, he proclaimed the integrity of Christian faith to Jews" and "taught that Christianity ought to be considered *preparatio messianica* by the Jewish community" (p. 46). Internally, Sherwin points out, "while other Jewish

3. Fritz A. Rothschild, "Architect and Herald of New Theology," *America* (March 10, 1973): 211.

thinkers stress 'Jewish survival,' Heschel called for a Jewish revival. . . . The Jewish quest must be for Jewish meaning, and not only for Jewish survival" (p. 46). Heschel's life and works reflect the grandeur of the Jewish tradition and signal the way in which Jews, after the Holocaust, may reaffirm their faith. In the only reference to criticism of Heschel, Sherwin claims: "Though Heschel has been criticized for having failed to allow the Holocaust to influence his thinking, such is not the case" (p. 47). He then shows how the "memory of the lost Atlantis of European Jewry was always with him" and "was a motivating force behind his words and deeds" (p. 47). Sherwin ends by reminding his readers that "Heschel's significance for Jews is immense, but as of yet untapped" (p. 50). While Sherwin's book begins to tap that significance, Kasimow's proceeds to explore it.

It would be difficult to find a theologian who has written more convincingly about the divine-human encounter than did Heschel. Kasimow's study is, thus, aptly entitled. Moreover, his book is itself a serious encounter with Heschel's theology. Not only does he convey the essentials of the theology, he traces the major influences on Heschel's thought, analyzes his views vis-à-vis other eminent religious thinkers in the Jewish tradition, examines some of the criticism directed at him, grapples with apparent inconsistencies in the writings, and explores Heschel's significance for Jews and Christians as well as his contribution to the dialogue between Judaism and other faiths.

In Chapter I, Kasimow contends, but does not attempt to prove, that "the Hasidic masters from whom he descended were the crucial influence on Heschel's approach to religion" (p. 2), particularly the Baal Shem Tov (1690–1760), the founder of Hasidism, and the Kotzker Rebbe (1787–1859). Drawing not only on Heschel's English-language work on these masters, *A Passion for Truth*, but also on the massive two-volume study of the Kotzker, written in Yiddish, Kasimow explores the ideas of these masters as Heschel understood them. He also points out how intense were Heschel's religious struggles as a result of allowing himself to be guided by two such opposite teachers. The Baal Shem found God everywhere and rejoiced in God's presence. The Kotzker was dreadfully aware of God's absence and stormed the heavens, accosting God for permitting evil to exist in the world. The Baal Shem inspired joy and ecstasy, the Kotzker fear and trembling. The Baal Shem emphasized love, the Kotzker truth.

Heschel would not deny either master. He realized that "Honesty, authenticity, integrity, without love, may lead to the ruin of others, of oneself, or both. While love, fervour or exaltation alone may seduce us into living in a fool's paradise — a wise man's hell" (p. 13).

Though Heschel combines the message of both masters, Kasimow contends that he has greater affinity with the Baal Shem and claims that "a reading of this book will bear out this fact" (p. 13). Like the Kotzker, Heschel believed "the world is sinking in mud," yet, like the Baal Shem, he

insists that there exists in this world a path to God. The next three chapters of this book deal with Heschel's three-fold path: through nature, through the Bible and through holy deeds.

The influence of the Baal Shem is particularly evident when Heschel writes about the ineffable dimension of the world and the glory of God therein. Chapter II deals with Heschel's path to God through creation, a Biblical approach revived by Hasidism. In order to discover the presence of God in the world, human beings must become sensitive to the grandeur and mystery of nature, not only to its power and beauty. Kasimow agrees with Eugene Borowitz that Heschel has "accomplished a major theological task" by helping us see in the world "what we have seen a thousand times but never as truly as now" (p. 24).

Chapter III probes Heschel's way of encountering God through the words of the Bible. Kasimow believes that Heschel's contribution in this area is unprecedented for at least three reasons: 1) his "original interpretation of prophecy and revelation," 2) "the poetic manner in which his writing presents itself," and 3) the fact that he "directs his attention not only to the meaning of revelation but also to the truth of revelation" (pp. 26–27). Concerning the first reason, after comparing Heschel's theory with the classic views in Judaism, Kasimow claims that "Heschel's understanding of revelation is more authentic to Judaism than the 'Hellenized Jewish theology' of the medieval Jewish philosophers" (p. 51) with whom "modern orthodox Jewish thinkers are substantially in agreement" (p. 39). Kasimow also points out how "Heschel's thought contrasts most radically with the Reform notion" (p. 42) and differs from Buber's approach to revelation (p. 44). Concerning the second and third reasons why the contribution is considered unprecedented, Kasimow claims that "the Bible comes to life for many Jews and Christians through Heschel's unique literary style" (p. 26) and "Heschel's arguments for the validity of revelation, when taken as a whole, are subtly convincing and may renew interest in the Bible itself" (p. 37).

Chapter IV explores Heschel's path to God through holy deeds (*mitsvot*). According to him, "we do not have faith because of deeds; we may attain faith through sacred deeds" (p. 57). Kasimow is perplexed by the fact that Heschel, who stresses the importance of *kavanah* (inner devotion), calls upon Jews to take a "leap of action" and perform mitsvot as a way of attaining faith in God. "Is it conceivable," he asks, "that Heschel . . . is asking us to take a 'leap of action' before we attain inner devotion?" (p. 56). He then quotes Maurice Friedman who asks: "But if we who are not observant Jews do not *now* feel ourselves commanded by God to perform the law, how shall we perform it with integrity even on the strength of Heschel's assurance that we *shall* know this to be God's will for us through our observance?" (p. 56). Kasimow responds correctly to his own question by contending that Heschel "tells us to perform the mitsvot even if we do not feel the intention" (p. 56), i.e., the proper sense of

devotion. But Kasimow is wrong to suggest, with Friedman, that deed before devotion implies action without integrity. Heschel calls for a leap of action, realizing that only those who suspect that action may be valuable and who seek to attain faith through that action will take the leap. The fact that, in Heschel's words, "one must continue to observe the law even when one is not ready to fulfill it 'for the sake of God'" (p. 57) does not mean that one does so without any integrity but that one may even see value in keeping the law — and thus act with integrity — prior to the belief that the law is of God. Moreover, the fact that, in this context, Heschel defines faith as "vision, sensitivity and attachment to God" and claims that "piety [doing mitsvot] is an attempt to attain such sensitivity and attachment" (p. 57) shows that his call for a leap of action is addressed primarily to those who are already striving for faith. Performing mitsvot in the hope of attaining faith is like studying the Bible in hope of finding God. Neither action need lack integrity. Also, the fact that in other contexts Heschel implies that yearning for faith is, itself, a matter of faith suggests that when Heschel speaks of taking a leap of action to attain faith he means perhaps that the leap itself is the beginning of faith which may lead to a life of faith. Thus can we understand Heschel's statement, not quoted by Kasimow, that "the way *to* faith is the way *of* faith."⁴

The fifth and last chapter deals with Heschel's religious significance. Kasimow begins by discussing why "Heschel's presentation of Judaism stirred the hearts and minds of both Jews and Christians," suggesting that it is "because he incorporated into his own system of thought many of the insights of the Jewish mystical tradition" (p. 69). He then examines how Heschel's three-fold path to God is meaningful to Christians as well as to Jews, and points out several other reasons for "Heschel's as yet immeasurable impact on the Christian world" (p. 75). Next, Kasimow explains how "Heschel has created a rich atmosphere not only for Jewish-Christian dialogue but has also opened the doors to Jewish encounter with Eastern traditions" (p. 80).

Concerning Heschel's acceptance of the validity of other religions, Kasimow claims that "Heschel's view comes into *direct conflict* with classical sources of Judaism" (p. 83). He bases the claim on his belief that Heschel grants validity "to *all* the world religions" (p. 79; emphasis mine) and regards other faiths as "equally true." After quoting Immanuel Jakobovits, that "the recognition of other faiths as 'equally true' is branded an apostasy in Jewish law" (p. 84), Kasimow says: "Given this evidence, we must therefore conclude that Heschel's attitude toward other religions is in conflict with the position of classical Judaism" (p. 85). Yet nowhere does Heschel suggest that *all* religions are valid or that other faiths are equally true. All that he claims is that "in this aeon diversity of religions is the will of God" (p. 79) and that, interpreting Malachi 1:11, "it seems that the

4. Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man: A Philosophy of Judaism* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1955), p. 137.

prophet proclaims that men all over the world, though they confess different conceptions of God are really worshipping One God, the Father of all men, though they may not be aware of it" (pp. 79–80). Heschel sees value in a number of religions, as do Maimonides and other sages in Israel's history. He therefore considers the diversity of religions a sign of God's will, but this does not mean that he regards all religions as valid, or thinks that other faiths reflect truth to the degree that Judaism does.

Kasimow also suggests that Heschel's position on other religions seems inconsistent, though really paradoxical, within his own theological structure because Heschel "would like to see all the world open its heart and mind to the words of the prophets" (p. 86). But coming to grips with that view is not the same as becoming a Jew. Moreover, Heschel does not say that "the renewal of man" can occur "only if" human beings come to grips with the Biblical view but "if only" they would. Therefore, Heschel's view need not be considered inconsistent or paradoxical. Rather, it is one of commitment to Judaism while being open to the validity within other religions.

Despite his finding Heschel's position in this area problematic, Kasimow concludes by claiming: "A thorough analysis of the Jewish attitude to other religions from Biblical times to the present reveals that Heschel's position, paradoxical though it is, promises to be the most meaningful position if dialogue between Judaism and other religions is really to take place" (p. 90). Despite my finding Kasimow's position on this issue, and some others, problematic, I must conclude that his book makes a genuine contribution to the study of Abraham Joshua Heschel, may his memory be blessed.

REVIEWS

Chinese Jews: Facts and Fictions

Mandarins, Jews, and Missionaries: The Jewish Experience in the Chinese Empire. By MICHAEL POLLAK. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society. Illustrated, 436 pp. \$14.95.

Reviewed by ANSON LAYTNER

THE SUBJECT'S history spans some one thousand years, peaking between the 12th and 17th centuries. By the early 1800s the community was in rapid decline, both in body and in soul and, at the time of the Communist Revolution, it was generally assumed that the Chinese Jews of Kai-feng were all but extinct.

Given such a history, and given the fact that the definitive scholarly work on the subject was published in 1972 (Donald Leslie, *The Survival of the Chinese Jews*, [Leiden: E.J. Brill] — itself a review and summation of all prior studies), one would have thought that little could be added to our body of knowledge concerning the Chinese Jews. But Michael Pollak, author of a previous work on them (*The Torah Scrolls of the Chinese Jews*, [Dallas: Bridwell Library, Southern Methodist University, 1975]), has succeeded both in breaking new ground on this well-analysed subject and in making its fascinating story available to the general public.

What makes Pollak's book so valuable is that, in addition to recounting the history of the Chinese Jews, he has focused on the impact that knowledge of their existence has had in the Western World. From the time of their "discovery" in 1605 by the Jesuit Matteo Ricci, this exotic and mysterious community has intrigued both Christians and Jews alike, and has stimulated the imagination of many a mind. Individuals of both faiths attempted to exploit the existence of this isolated

community for their own purposes and, in most every case, operated more on the basis of fiction than of fact. But, then, the fads themselves were unimportant. The attractive power inherent in the story of the Chinese Jews lay in its potential adaptability to the needs of so diverse an audience. What mattered were not the facts about the Chinese Jews or their needs, *per se*, but, rather, that the singular fact of their existence could be utilized to serve some "greater" purpose. To cite one example: Both Catholic and Protestant theologians hoped to find in the possession of the Chinese Jews a pristine copy of the Torah, one which still held predictions of the birth and life of Jesus. (These Christian scholars laboured under the mistaken notion that Western Jewry had altered the text of their Torah scrolls to exclude any reference to the coming of Jesus.) Thus, the Chinese Jews were used as ammunition in the doctrinal battle which Christianity was waging against its Jewish roots and against Judaism. Another illustration: The statesman and rabbi, Manasseh ben Israel, employed the existence of the Chinese Jews to bolster his case for the readmittance of the Jews to England, from which they had been expelled in 1290. In keeping with the millennial thinking then current in Puritan England and widespread among the Jews of the time as well, Manasseh ben Israel argued that the Messiah would come only when the Jews were dispersed to "the ends of the earth." Referring to the recent discovery of the "Lost Ten Tribes" in South America and to the existence of a Jewish community in distant China, the rabbi pointedly declared that, by continuing to exclude the Jews, England was blocking the way for the world's redemption! In this way the Chinese Jews "helped" European Jewry to find a new haven on Eng-

land's shores. A third and final example: For the Protestant missionaries operating in China in the heyday of imperialism, the anticipated speedy conversion of the Chinese Jews held forth the possibility of making inroads among their "heathen" Chinese neighbors. The Chinese Jews, however, proved as impervious to the missionaries' message as were the other Chinese (or, for that matter, as were the Jews in the West). Many such illustrations abound in Pollak's book, making for fascinating reading. The Nazis feared the influence of the Chinese Jews (the supposed Jewish-Communist-Chinese plot to control the world) and their Japanese allies investigated the Kai-feng community; Western Jewry has sporadically attempted to aid the Chinese Jewish community and modern Chinese scholars have written about them. All in all, it is extraordinary that so numerically insignificant a community in so populous a nation as China could have excited so universal an interest.

It is ironical, indeed, that just as Pollak's book was being published, the first new information on the Chinese Jews in over twenty years was being received here in the West. Pollak traces Western contact with the Kai-feng Jews through to 1957 — the last occasion when any Westerner was permitted to visit that city's Jews. At that time — contrary to general belief — a sizeable remnant of the Jewish community still survived. But, from 1957 until the purging of the "Gang of Four," all attempts to visit and/or obtain information about the Chinese Jews were rebuffed. Since the purging of the "Gang of Four," however, new information about the Kai-feng Jews has steadily filtered westward. Pollak documents some of these tidbits in his notes: that the Chinese have undertaken several archeological digs at the site

of the ancient synagogue and have uncovered fragments of a Torah scroll and other artifacts, and that a Ph.D.-level study is currently underway on the Chinese Jews. But the most exciting news, which came out too late for inclusion in Pollak's book, is the disclosure by UPI correspondent, Aline Mosby, that, on her recent visit to Kai-feng she actually met and talked with several Chinese Jewish families. What is of particular interest is that after so many generations of isolation and decline there remain in Kai-Feng some Chinese who still regard themselves as Jews, although for them being Jewish apparently means belonging to an ethnic minority people. It can only be hoped, given Chinese interest in the subject, the greater intellectual and academic freedom now blossoming in China, and China's increased receptivity to contacts with the West, that joint Chinese-Western-Jewish studies of the Kai-feng Jews will be possible while a remnant of this fascinating community still survives.

To return to Pollak's book: *Mandarins, Jews, and Missionaries* reads, in many ways, like an adventure story, crisscrossing geographic locations and transcending ages. It is altogether engrossing. Like a good detective, Pollak has sniffed out every available clue on the Chinese Jews; his research is solid and well-documented. Both in terms of relating the history of the Chinese Jews and tracing their impact on the Western mind, there is no better work available. Treat yourself to a glimpse of a rare flower of a community — a hybrid of two ancient stocks. With a lot of care and some good fortune the Chinese Jews may yet blossom anew.

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The Founder of Ethical Culture

From Reform Judaism to Ethical Culture: The Religious Evolution of Felix Adler. By BENNY KRAUT. Cincinnati. Hebrew Union College Press, 1979. 285 pp. + xv.

Reviewed by ALAN W. MILLER

WE ALL KNOW that a certain number of people will be killed on the road over Thanksgiving weekend, but there is a world of difference between being conscious of the statistic and the feelings of the next of kin who identify the body of the loved one in the morgue. We all know that a certain number of Americans will be divorced this year, but there is a world of difference between reading about them in the New York Times and being inside the family where the divorce is taking place. We all know that when groups at different developmental levels meet there is an inevitable cultural clash, but there is a world of difference between the sociological analysis and the raw reality of being a member of that minority group which is traumatized by the impact with the majority.

Benny Kraut has written a phenomenological description of what it is like to be inside such a maelstrom. We all know that when traditional Judaism impacted with modernity it was inevitable that some Jewish intellectuals would fall by the wayside.

Adler's passing out of Judaism both reflected general Jewish trends in modern times and manifested particular religious proclivities unique to him. On the one hand, his departure from Judaism is representative of a fundamental motif in modern Jewish history: it typifies one Jewish response to modernity marked by grappling with the problematic status of Jewish particularism. Having left Judaism for intellectual rea-

sons, Adler's departure from the Jewish consensus can be compared with that of other modern Jewish intellectuals. Valuable insights into the nature of modern Judaism and Jewish identity might be gained by comparing Adler's break and its motivations with those of men such as Solomon Maimon, Heinrich Heine, the Jewish Saint Simonians, and the Jewish Freemasons, as well as by comparing the reasons for his attraction to Kant with those of other Jewish Kantians, such as Maimon, Markus Herz, Lazarus Bendavid, Solomon Steinheim, Hermann Cohen, and Leo Baeck, who were attracted to the categorical imperative because it offered a secularized form of the *mitzvah*. Adler should be included in any attempted typology of the modern Jewish intellectual struggling with his religion and identity (p. 214).

And, as far as he goes, Benny Kraut has written an eminently readable, well-researched, scholarly account of how the son of Rabbi Samuel Adler of Temple Emanu-el, maternal grandson of Rabbi Feibisch Frankfurter of Friedberg and paternal grandson of Rabbi Sirig Adler, *dayan* of Worms and cousin to Rabbi Nathan Adler of Frankfurt am Main, not to mention a relative of Nathan Marcus Adler, Chief Rabbi of the British Empire, was sent to Germany in 1870 to finish his studies as a rabbi in order that he might succeed his father as spiritual leader of Temple Emanu-el.

But something not so funny happened on the way to Fifth Avenue. Adler discovered that, to his way of thinking, the Reform Judaism in which he had been reared was riddled with contradictions. Through the works of leaders of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* movement it had historicized Judaism, conceiving of it as something that had evolved (Geiger) but insisting on illogical exceptions — the absolute ethical value of prophetic

ethics and the mission of the Jews to spread ethical monotheism to the world through a universalism which would have to be delayed until some point in the future.

Moreover, in Germany, the young Adler discovered Kant and found the categorical imperative more to his taste as a basis of the moral life than tortuous inferences from the historical development of a religion that he increasingly felt was outmoded and whose carriers, he was convinced, were doomed to historical extinction.

Adler told one of his classmates at the *Hochschule* in Berlin that, on his return to New York, he would "make things hum in the religious world" (p. 84). That was the understatement of the century. At first, only a few Jews realized how far Adler had strayed from the religion of his fathers. To his credit, Samuel Adler's associate at Emanu-el, Rabbi Gustav Gottheil, did. Felix Adler preached only one sermon at Emanu-el. Subsequently, he was invited by some of his admirers in that congregation to give a series of lectures at the Lyric Hall. These led to a non-resident professorship in Hebrew and Oriental Literature at Cornell, funded by the same admirers. There, his outspoken views on religion proved as unpalatable to Christians as to Jews, whereupon Cornell let him go. In 1877, he founded the Ethical Culture Society.

And so, Adler's break with Judaism reached its final expression. From his initial discontent with the Jewish religion and his break from the Jewish socio-religious consensus in the late 1870s, Adler ultimately was led to devise an ideology calling for the end of the Jewish ethnic and religious heritage, an end to Jewish existence. True, already in 1878 Adler had suggested that one need not restrict oneself to a particular race. Indeed, in that year Adler remarked that "questions of race, distinctions

of birth are accidental and can have no meaning for us on the platform whereon we stand." Even then Adler assented to the idea of intermarriage between two persons united by a broad spiritual outlook and unfettered by any particularist theological creed. But it seems that only following his encounter with Jewish nationalism and Zionism did Adler explicitly insist, *as a matter of religio-ethical ideological policy*, that Jews remove themselves from the Jewish racial community (p. 210).

That Felix Adler was a scholar of the highest integrity cannot be denied. That he was as riddled with contradictions as the Reform Judaism which he disavowed also cannot be denied. He left Judaism but continued to cater largely to Jews. He claimed that he was not interested in religion, yet what was lecturing on Sunday mornings, with an organ, if not, in the context of the age, a substitute denomination? Kraut draws attention to the curious anomaly of Adler's youthful inveighing against Christmas trees.

In his essay "The Christmas Tree," Felix declared Christmas to be a day of Jewish "martyrdom, persecution and suffering," a day on which Jews were brutally slaughtered. This martyrdom showed itself "on every page (in history), a hundred times repeated" (p. 28).

And, yet, such apparent sensitivity to his Jewish origins did not

mitigate against his adoption of festivals generally associated with Christianity both in his institutional and private life. Christmas and Easter were occasions for Adler to deliver major addresses to the Society for Ethical Culture on the contemporary symbolic meaning of those festivals for the modern age. His own family held Christmas parties featuring a Christmas tree and an exchange of gifts; the hope for a "Merry Christmas" often ended many of his letters to his family. Adler's observance of Christmas festivities alerts us to the deep irony of

his passionate youthful outburst against Jews bringing Christmas trees into their homes; Christmas was the one ritual custom identified with a theistic religion which he celebrated (p. 176).

Kraut describes this incredible *volte face* as "somewhat inconsistent with his universalist orientation." What a curious impartial neutrality. When Adler spoke of "spiritual congeniality" it had a Christian tinge and a subtly unvoiced anti-Jewish bias.

No doubt there were sensitive, ethical spirits among those who founded Ethical Culture, but it was largely a vehicle for assimilation. Adler stimulated people intellectually and ethically; he was a first-rate orator and held his audiences spellbound; indirectly, he raised the level of Jewish life both culturally and ethically merely by serving as a critical catalyst; his involvement in social action was unparalleled among leaders of his day. He benefitted Jew and Gentile, the former very often more accidentally and fortuitously than by any deliberate design. His *leitmotif*, "not the creed but the deed," bore rich fruit in areas where least expected. Stephen Wise was probably right when he called Adler "the one prophetic Jewish voice in the life of the city" (p. 211). But something is still missing from Kraut's account.

Nobody emerged totally unscathed from the traumatic encounter between medieval and modern in Jewish life. As Alan J. Yuter has perceptively observed (JUDAISM, 28,2 [Spring, 1979]: 147-159), even the ultra-Orthodox became ideological. Kraut's book deserves to be read in great detail fully to appreciate the flesh on the skeleton outlined above. It should also be read in the context of Sartre's *Anti-Semite and Jew*, Cud-dihy's *The Ordeal of Civility* and Diamond's brilliant essay "The In-

authenticity of Anthropology: The Myth of Structuralism," for it raises issues wider than the disenchantment with, and the defection from, Reform Judaism by one of its most intellectually and ethically gifted sons.

What is missing is the *Jüdische Selbstthass* which Kraut claims did not exist. What is missing is Oedipus. Kraut is strangely silent on the psycho-historical question which surely cannot be ignored today in such a work. Where does the father/son syndrome fit in with all this ideation? There is very little on this topic and the little there is, is all sweetness and light. Is that conceivable? Do rebellions of this order, which split entire communities, stem from preferring Kant to Geiger? And as a basis for morality at that? Or are there, *in addition*, other considerations? I found myself wondering again and again, in reading this fascinating book, what Erik Erikson or Robert Jay Lifton or Norman O. Brown might have done with some of this material, at least some of the questions they might have asked. Man does not rebel via intellectual ideation alone and Kraut knows that as well as anybody else.

We are given some tantalizingly insufficient material which is never analyzed, but which is enough to whet the appetite.

To an extent, his perception of European morality was colored by his excessive zeal for sexual purity. In earlier years, he had never been quite comfortable with the subject of sex, due partially to his shy and retiring nature. As he matured, the reverence for women and sexual purity became a dominant motif in his lectures. In fact, his later addresses on women's role in society and on the subject of divorce reflect perhaps the most conservative of all his opinions (p. 51).

Morgenthau was also a member of Adler's "Union for Higher Life," a

very small group of selected people initiated at Cornell and devoted to moral purity, celibacy in bachelorhood, and simplicity in dress and manners (p. 130).

As for Adler's character, Kraut indicates that there was a sharp dichotomy between his relaxed home behavior and his widely acknowledged authoritarian, dogmatic, haughty and imperious attitudes outside. The Ethical Culture Society "was Dr. Adler's society — and its members wanted it that way" (p. 110). And there is a curious paradox between the fact that his father, wedded though he was to the Abolitionist cause, never once raised the moral issue of slavery from the pulpit out of fear of offending his middle-class Jewish

congregation's economic proclivities whilst the son went out of his way, at Cornell, for example, *pour épater le bourgeois*. Historians should at least give a nod in the direction of the unconscious these days.

Mordecai M. Kaplan designated his own attempt to stave off incipient assimilation The Society for the Advancement of Judaism. The choice was a deliberate gauntlet thrown down in the presence of Ethical Culture. In their ethical thrust neither man can be faulted. Kaplan loved Jews. And that made all the difference.

ALAN W. MILLER is rabbi of *The Society for the Advancement of Judaism*, New York.

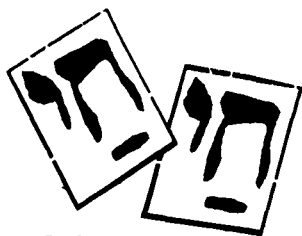
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Trends Within Contemporary Orthodoxy

TO THE EDITOR OF JUDAISM:

Prof. Lawrence Kaplan ("The Ambiguous Modern Orthodox Jew," Fall 1979) is to be congratulated for introducing readers to yet another subgrouping within the Orthodox community — the modern Orthodox Jew who, while comfortable in his identity, makes a serious intellectual effort at harmonizing Orthodoxy with modernity. He is correct in stating that not all modern Orthodox Jews resemble Heilman's description of people torn between two worlds. It must be pointed out, however, that there is yet another, far more common type who populates many modern Orthodox synagogues . . . He is most often a product of the post-World War Two generation. He rarely opens up a *gemara* and, in fact, though he might not admit it to anyone but his friends, he would much rather play poker or see a good "R"-rated movie. He knows the latest dances, likes to come late to synagogue, and talks more than he prays once he does arrive. Not only is he relatively undisturbed by the very cogent issues raised by Kaplan, but his own religious practices differ considerably from the modern Orthodox Jews described by Heilman and Kaplan. He will eat hot dairy food in a non-kosher restaurant when with a business client, play frisbee on Sabbath afternoon (within the *eruv*, of course) and his wife is not likely to use a *mikveh*. He does not fall into Liebman's category of nonobservant Orthodox because he sends his children to a yeshivah, has a strictly kosher home, will not eat nonkosher meat on the outside, and will generally adhere to the Sabbath laws like not watching television or driving a car, though he may "cheat a little on the side."

I also wonder whether the people Kaplan describes are likely to develop a substantial constituency. There has been a perceptible shift to the right among Orthodox Jews in recent years . . . In preparation for a book I am now

completing, I interviewed numerous persons at Yeshiva University, among them Rabbi Zevulun Charlop, Registrar of the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary who said: "Things are altogether different than fifteen years ago. Guys learn until one or two in the morning. For the evening session we often have three to four hundred guys learning. Their whole outlook, sexual, religious, anti-college except in the narrowest, most utilitarian sense, is completely different from what it used to be. We have moved way to the right." Since Yeshiva is often associated with the modern Orthodox community and the efforts to synthesize these two terms, it is questionable how large a population base there is for those who would like to see Orthodox Jews relate the tradition to "modern Biblical scholarship." Whether this newly emerging type at Yeshiva University will become like Heilman's traditional-modern-Orthodox Jew or even a right-wing yeshivah type, remains to be seen.

Kaplan correctly observes, I feel, that when Heilman's modern Orthodox group employs "Yenglish," they are imitating the way Torah is studied at the Lakewood and Telshe yeshivot. I want to emphasize that such imitations notwithstanding, these two groups are worlds apart and that a useful way of demonstrating this might be that the yeshivah student uses "Yenglish" even in social interactions, not only during Torah study. In conclusion I would like to quote the following remark by an American-born student currently at the Mirrer Yeshivah in Brooklyn, N.Y.:

When it comes to going to movies I *takeh* (really) hold (feel) that there's a real *sacana*h (danger) that something there could be *mashpia*h (influence) on you in a way that could undermine your whole *hashkafah* (belief system). Therefore, it's not *kedai* (worthwhile) to go and put yourself in such a *matzav* (position). Do you *chap* (get) what I'm saying?

Now what modern-Orthodox Jew in Heilman's synagogue, or anywhere else for that matter, would talk like *that*??
New York, N.Y.

WILLIAM B. HELMREICH

LAWRENCE KAPLAN *replies*:

Prof. Helmreich criticizes both Prof. Heilman and me for ignoring a very common type of Jew who populates modern Orthodox synagogues, the poker playing, disco dancing, synagogue shmoozing, corner-cutting (vis-à-vis religious practices), *gemara*-less, marginal Orthodox Jew. This pungent and colorful portrait of this marginal figure will certainly trigger a shock of recognition on the part of anyone who frequents modern orthodox synagogues.

Let me say in my defense that, unlike both Helmreich and Heilman, I am not a trained sociologist and my article was not intended to be a comprehensive survey of the state of modern Orthodoxy in America. My training is in intellectual and cultural history, and my article focused on a single issue: viz. how the modern Orthodox Jew relates, or does not relate, the two component elements of his identity, modernity and orthodoxy, to one another, and my main concern was the profound ideological and religious implications thereof. However, since the question of the marginal Orthodox Jew has been raised, let me make two, admittedly impressionistic, observations.

First, the emergence of this type of Jew can partially be traced, paradoxically enough, to the success of the Orthodox community in America which nowadays is attractive enough, both in terms of status and psychological appeal, to maintain its hold, at least partially, on these marginal figures who, years ago, would have drifted away, perhaps to join some prestigious Conservative synagogue. Second, I am not certain whether these marginal figures attend only modern Orthodox synagogues. I suspect, that a few are even to be found in *shtetl*akh. Certainly,

many of them send their children to traditional Orthodox yeshivot, for since they themselves have drifted away from religious practice and study, they operate on what has been termed (I believe first by Michael Wyschogrod) the "discount theory of Judaism" where "more is better" — for the children, that is ("they'll lose some of it later" or so the theory goes) — and since their conception of Judaism is the traditional Orthodox one, for them it is the traditional Orthodox yeshivot which represent the "more."

Prof. Helmreich wonders whether the Jews I described in the conclusion of my essay, those who strive to integrate their modernity and their Orthodoxy, are likely to develop a substantial constituency. So do I. I will return to this point at the end of my remarks.

More particularly, Prof. Helmreich notes the shift to the right among the students of Yeshiva University and queries what that portends for the future of modern Orthodoxy. Like many graduates of that institution . . . I am well aware of this shift. And like the current president of Yeshiva, Dr. Norman Lamm, I applaud it "insofar as it presages more thorough study, greater commitment to piety, and more punctilious observance of both ritual and ethical laws," but deplore the shift insofar as it is accompanied by "bigotry and shallowness . . . self-righteous super-piety — [and] totalitarian, authoritarian, narrowness . . ." Since Professor Helmreich raised the issue, a few, again impressionistic, comments are called for regarding the causes and significance of the shift.

First, the fact that many students at Yeshiva are now "anti-college except in the narrowest, most utilitarian sense" may not only be a result of the shift to the right. It may also . . . be part of the retreat from the liberal arts and sciences and the growing emphasis on vocational and professional training so prevalent on American college campuses today. In this respect, the shift to the right is at the same time accom-

panied by a growing Americanization of the Orthodox community.

Second, the fact that there are fewer students today at Yeshiva who are interested in integrating their dual commitments to modernity and orthodoxy than there were some ten or fifteen years ago does not necessarily mean that there are fewer such students within the Orthodox community as a whole. Rather, I would suggest that, as part of the above-mentioned growing Americanization and as part of the growing openness of the general academic community (extending even to Ivy League institutions) to Orthodox students, many who would previously have gone to Yeshiva University are now attending prestigious secular academic institutions and continuing their Jewish studies either in the Jewish studies programs that have sprung up on college campuses or in the informal programs of Torah learning readily available either on or off campus . . . What this development portends for the future is not clear. Will these students in these new settings acquire the solid traditional Jewish learning that they would have acquired at Yeshiva? Can Yeshiva somehow win back this type of student? If not, does that mean that Yeshiva will no longer be the major institution wherein the integration of modernity and orthodoxy can take place? Can some new institutional base for such integration develop? I have no simple answers.

Third, and this is the flip side of the second point — the fact that a growing number of students at Yeshiva are of the traditional Orthodox type may not only be a result of a shift to the right but, strangely enough, of a shift to the left. . . . A growing number of students who previously would have attended one of the traditional orthodox New York yeshivot by day and a city college by night are now opting for Yeshiva, a move for them in the direction of

greater liberalization and openness! To what extent this is a significant development, and the reasons for it, are still not clear. Perhaps it is the decline in academic standards of many of the city colleges; perhaps, also, even the traditional Orthodox are, themselves, in subtle ways, becoming modernized. It is interesting that the Acting Dean of Yeshiva College recently stated that Yeshiva ought to be competing primarily with Mir and Torah Va'Daath (two traditional Orthodox New York yeshivot) for its students, and not with Columbia and Harvard.

Fourth, as I stated above, President Lamm is very much aware of the negative side of this shift to the right, and Yeshiva has, therefore, begun to develop academic programs that foster a spirit of "adventurousness and openness" and establish "a climate of ideological moderation and courage" so that "effective creativity in realms of Torah and Mada (general knowledge)" can take root and flourish.

I do not underestimate the difficulties in creating a truly modern Orthodoxy. And yet, . . . [i]n the course of speaking to many people who, like myself, are concerned about it, I have come to realize that we may be divided into the optimists and the pessimists. The later think that the modern Orthodox have already lost the battle of determining the future of the American Orthodox community to the traditionalists; the optimists, while acutely aware of the stark reality that the modern Orthodox may be losing the battle, nevertheless maintain, perhaps stubbornly, perhaps foolishly, that the battle is not yet irretrievably lost, that with vision, courage, commitment and dedication the trend may yet be reversed.

I count myself among the optimists.

Montreal, Canada LAWRENCE KAPLAN

"Unobservant," "Modern" and Orthodox Jews

I do not wish to become involved in the details of the interesting discussion between Prof. William B. Helmreich and Prof. Lawrence Kaplan regarding the various categories of "modern Orthodox" Jews, but I should like to comment on Dr. Helmreich's reference to Liebman's category of "non-observant Orthodox." Since we are told that the Messiah will come when statements will be attributed properly to their original authors, it should be pointed out that this sociological category first came into existence many years ago. My good friend, the late Rabbi Joseph H. Lookstein, served for many years as professor of sociology at Yeshiva University. He once reported to me how he had analyzed the structure of American Jewry somewhat as follows: Total population, 5,000,000; affiliated with Reform Judaism, $\frac{3}{4}$ of a million; affiliated with Conservative Judaism, a million and a quarter. Hence, the remainder, 3,000,000, are Orthodox. Since, however, experience shows that many of these 3,000,000 are not always punctilious in observing the *mizvot*, most of them belong to the category of "non-observant Orthodox."

I was greatly impressed by this contribution to Jewish sociology and pointed out to my friend that the research could be carried one major step further. The famous Hasidic Rabbi of Kotzk always emphasized the importance of the virtue of *kawwanah* "intent, conscious dedication," as a prerequisite for the performance of a *mizvah*. On this basis I suggested that the millions of "non-observant Orthodox" Jews in America are not merely Orthodox, but Hasidim and, indeed, adherents of the Hasidic school of Kotzk.

In a more serious vein, it is clear that the category "non-observant Orthodox" belongs to the area of apologetics. That the term has no real validity is clear from two facts: (1) The over-

whelming majority of those to whom the term is applied do not maintain the traditional code of ritual practice, and (2) they would not accept the Orthodox dogmatic theology if they stopped to examine its content.

We may go even further. A large proportion of the "observant Orthodox" who designate themselves as such, do so only because they observe the major elements of traditional practice, like the Sabbath and the Festivals, *kashrut* and daily prayer, but do not really accept many of the basic tenets of Orthodox belief. This alignment is understandable, since, in Judaism, observance of the ritual *mizvot* has generally been regarded as the touchstone of the tradition. But "ortho-praxis" is not "orthodoxy." Orthodoxy demands not only conformity to a code of "correct practice," but acceptance of a body of "correct doctrine."

This problem, to be sure, is often ignored in "modern Orthodox" circles. But it remains particularly acute for those who have been exposed to the ideas and attitudes of science and philosophy. That is why the ultra right in contemporary Orthodoxy regard with suspicion their "left-wing" and "moderate" confreres, who constantly find it necessary to protest their genuineness. A leading spokesman for this group recently wrote that they "are *not less* Orthodox" than their right-wing opponents (*italics mine*).

This is not to deny that contemporary Orthodoxy possesses rich sources of vitality and creativity for which all who are dedicated to Jewish survival must be grateful. However, the basic contention of Orthodoxy, that traditional Judaism has been unchanging in the past, and is, therefore, monolithic in the present, is contradicted both by history and by experience.

ROBERT GORDIS

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